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CONTENTS

27 January 1993

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

French Ambassador Claims Relations 'Normal'	1
Editorial Cites Islamist Issue [Tunis REALITES 31 Dec]	1
Ambassador Discusses Islamists, UMA [Tunis REALITES 31 Dec]	1

NEAR EAST

REGIONAL AFFAIRS

Iraqi Elite Reportedly Emigrating to Jordan [London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 4 Dec]	4
Talibani Criticizes UN on Lack of Swift Aid [London AL-HAYAH 1 Dec]	4
Statistics From Algerian Tourism Study Reported [Tunis REALITES 7 Jan]	5
GCC's al-Quwayz Calls EC Tax Prejudicial [London AL-MAJALLAH 2 Dec]	7

PALESTINIAN AFFAIRS

Report Describes Hebron Prison Conditions [London AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI 15 Dec]	8
'Extremists' Train To Fight Intifadah in Street [London AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI 14 Dec]	9
Al-Maliki Encourages Cooperation With Hamas [Nazareth AL-SINNARAH 4 Dec]	9
Al-Tamimi on Ulama's Goals, Funding, Politics [Amman AL-RIBAT 18 Nov]	12
Israeli Study: 30 Percent of Palestinians Poor [Amman AL-RIBAT 18 Nov]	13
Economist: 42 Percent Unemployment in Territories [London AL-HAYAH 4 Dec]	13

EGYPT

Youths Discuss Fears of New U.S. Administration [AL-JUMHURIYAH 6 Nov]	14
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IRAQ

SURAQIYA Article on Opposition Reprinted [AL-'IRAQ 19 Nov]	15
Opposition Figure on Democracy, Federation, Unity [London AL-HAYAH 11 Dec]	18
Husayn's International Position Assessed [Groot-Bijgaarden DE STANDAARD 12 Jan]	20
Opposition Discusses Return of Monarchy [London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 5 Dec]	20

JORDAN

Minister: Budget Provides 6,000 New Jobs [London AL-HAYAH 7 Dec]	21
Bank Assets Grow to 6.3 Billion Dinars [London AL-HAYAH 7 Dec]	22
Farhan Lists IAF Projects, Political Programs [AL-RIBAT 18 Nov]	22
Report Profiles Social Security System [AL-DUSTUR 15 Nov]	24
Citizens Discuss Political Participation, Parties [AL-DUSTUR 22 Nov]	24
AL-RA'Y Workers' Strike Follows New Press Law [London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 11 Jan]	27
Paper Outlines New Press Law, Controversy [London AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI 14 Dec]	27

KUWAIT

Defense Seeks Increase of 3.5 Billion Dinars [London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 11 Dec]	28
Demographic Data on Kuwaiti, Foreign Population [London AL-HAYAH 11 Dec]	29
Assembly Seeks Wide-Ranging Changes in Military [London AL-HAYAH 20 Dec]	30
Assembly Holds Secret Session on Security [London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 22 Dec]	31
Iraqi Collaborator 'Ala' Husayn's Trial [London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 20 Dec]	32

LEBANON

Minister Urges Media To Identify Israel as Enemy [Shanayh Radio] 32

OMAN

Industrial Production Reaches \$500 Million [London AL-HAYAH 12 Dec] 32
Number of Banks to Shrink Below 10 by 1994 [London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 5 Dec] 34

QATAR

Foreign Competition on Gas Products Project [London AL-HAYAH 27 Dec] 36

SUDAN

Details Reported on Training Camps [Algiers LIBERTE 9 Dec] 37
Foreign Affairs Minister Outlines Policy [AL-QUWAT AL-MUSALLAHAH 20 Nov] 38
Party Leaders Appointed in Khartoum [London AL-HAYAH 24 Nov] 39

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

Government Issues 1993 Draft Budget [London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 12 Jan] 39

SOUTH ASIA

IRAN

Liquid Gas Sale Offered to Public in Tehran [KEYHAN-E HAVA'I 30 Dec] 41
Restriction on Salary of Retirees Lifted [KEYHAN-E HAVA'I 30 Dec] 41
Need for Caspian Sea Free-Trade Zone Viewed [JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI 8 Dec] 41
Khuzestan Tribal Military Base Inaugurated [ABRAR 26 Nov] 43
Army Medical School Ready To Accept Students [ABRAR 6 Dec] 43
Unemployment Hinders Kordestan Economic Expansion [ABRAR 23 Nov] 43
Bridge Opening To Facilitate Trade With Azarbaijan [ABRAR 8 Dec] 44
Sarakhs To Become Free-Trade Zone [ABRAR 8 Dec] 44
Unsanitary Conditions Threaten Health in Zahedan [ABRAR 19 Nov] 45

French Ambassador Claims Relations 'Normal'

Editorial Cites Islamist Issue

93AF0321A Tunis REALITES in French
31 Dec 92 p 12

[Editorial by Moncef Mahroug: "Tunisian Dissidents in France an Obstacle to Good Relations"—first paragraph is REALITES introduction]

[Text] With the settlement of the drug-trafficking affair, only one stumblingblock remains to good relations between France and Tunisia: the activities of Tunisian opposition members in France. The problem does not appear close to a solution.

After several troubled weeks, Franco-Tunisian relations seem tranquil again. At least, that is the impression given by the French ambassador to Tunisia, His Excellency Jean-Noel de Bouillane de Lacoste, as he responded to questions in an interview with REALITES. France's ambassador even went so far as to deny that the two countries had suffered any crisis in their relations. While officials on both shores of the Mediterranean refrained from making remarks that would confirm the existence of a crisis, the malaise of recent weeks was a recognized fact in the eyes of observers. It was triggered by two issues on which Paris and Tunis have differing views: the drug-trafficking case in which Tunisians were implicated, a case recently tried by a French court; and the activities of Tunisian opposition figures—Islamists, in particular—who reside in France.

It was the drug-trafficking case that caused the most ink to flow on both sides of the divide. The fact that Mr. Habib Ben Ali was among the defendants caused the French press to take more interest than usual in this ordinary criminal case, which became politicized. Viewed as excessive, the press coverage eventually exasperated the Tunisians, and led Tunisian journalists—after a few days of uneasy silence—to launch a fierce campaign against the French press. Inevitably, the case took on a political dimension.

And yet, the French point out, Paris had sought to contain the case—short of interfering in the work of the French justice system—in an effort to prevent it from damaging Franco-Tunisian relations. Along those lines, the French remark, "we chose not to arrest Mr. Habib Ben Ali at Orly, even though we could have done so." In addition, "we authorized a manhunt limited to French soil so as not to place Tunisia in an uncomfortable position." The French Government acted as it did because France and Tunisia have long had a close relationship and cooperation between them has reached such a degree that "it cannot be undermined by a matter like the drug-trafficking case." So, the interlude is over, the case is closed. In substance, that is what France's ambassador to Tunisia said when he remarked, "The justice system—in complete independence—has reached a verdict in this minor case and that is the end of it." (The interview appears in the following pages.)

If the drug-trafficking case belongs to the past, the same cannot be said of the issue of Tunisian opposition figures residing in France. In the interview that follows, France's ambassador reiterated the French policy of political asylum, stating that "we welcome onto French soil those foreigners who have complied with immigration procedures and we grant political asylum to individuals who are harassed in their own countries because of their political activities." But, "foreigners who violate French law must expect to bear the full consequences of their deeds."

Behind the scenes, French officials are even more blunt in defense of political activity by foreigners in general and Tunisians in particular who oppose their home-country governments. Political activity by dissidents, which the Tunisian Government finds extremely irritating, is viewed by France's officials as an integral component of refugee status and therefore impossible to restrict, much less impede. The French authorities would intervene only if "a terrorist action were being mounted" and, they claim, "we have ways of finding out about it." France's officials angrily reject the view that the freedom granted to opponents, Tunisians in this case, is part of a tactic of keeping two irons in the fire.

One source of discord between Tunis and Paris has been eliminated; another remains. Can Franco-Tunisian relations regain their former luster despite the continuing dispute over the activities of Tunisian opponents in France? Only time will tell.

Ambassador Discusses Islamists, UMA

93AF0321B Tunis REALITES in French
31 Dec 92 pp 13-15

[Interview with Jean Noel de Bouillane De Lacoste, French ambassador to Tunisia, by Moncef Mahroug; place and date not given]

[Text] France's ambassador to Tunisia as of four months ago, Mr. Jean Noel de Bouillane de Lacoste, has assumed his duties at a difficult juncture in Franco-Tunisian relations. On that subject, he attempted to sound reassuring in his answers to our questions.

[Mahroug] Franco-Tunisian relations, which have been troubled for some time, do not appear to have improved in recent weeks. What explanation do you see for that?

[De Bouillane de Lacoste] That is a rather hard-hitting introduction to the subject! Your pessimism, at any rate, is completely unjustified. Franco-Tunisian relations are not troubled nor have they deteriorated. President Ben Ali himself said, in his speech on 6 December, that there is no dispute between Tunisia and France nor any loss of commitment, and he expressed satisfaction with the level of bilateral relations. France shares his view fully.

[Mahroug] To pursue the question, is there a real incompatibility between what we are saying and reality?

[De Bouillane de Lacoste] It takes a lot of imagination to perceive incompatibility. Franco-Tunisian relations have been too close for too long to be vulnerable to the vagaries of political changes on either side of the Mediterranean. Since 1987, our relations have expanded in all fields, new forms of cooperation such as the partnership program have been initiated, and political contacts have taken place at the highest level: President Ben Ali has made two visits to France, President Mitterrand has made as many visits to Tunisia. Where is there a lack of connection? Where is there incompatibility?

[Mahroug] Over the past few months, several French opposition figures have visited Tunisia. Could a change of majority party in France affect the state of relations between France and Tunisia and how so?

[De Bouillane de Lacoste] For more than 20 years, France's policy toward the Arab world has been one of presence, independence, and equilibrium. Our positions regarding the Maghreb are known and they have not changed. Obviously, this includes Tunisia. For that reason, as I have already told you, I see our relations as invulnerable to politics and circumstantial fluctuations. I can only applaud Tunisia's invitations to French figures regardless of their affiliation—last month, it was Mr. Claude Cheysson and Mr. Henri Saby.

[Mahroug] The special status of a few Tunisian extremists in France is a problem. Moreover, certain segments of the French press have politicized an ordinary drug trafficking case, and this triggered a malaise. What are your thoughts?

[De Bouillane de Lacoste] Unless you insist, I will refrain from using the term "malaise" for which there is no concrete justification. Regarding the narcotics case, the justice system—in complete independence—has reached a verdict in this minor case and that is the end of it. As for Tunisian opposition figures in France, our police sees to it that their activities remain within legal bounds. Should they decide to break the law, they would bear the consequences.

[Mahroug] Paris rejected the Tunisian government's request for the extradition of certain leaders of the An-Nahdha movement. Why?

[De Bouillane de Lacoste] If the request was made, as you claim, it probably did not satisfy all the conditions required by our legislation.

[Mahroug] Recently, the French police made arrests among the Islamists in Paris but, at the same time, some 30 Tunisian Islamists were granted political asylum in France. It is therefore difficult to pin down the French government's position toward the Islamists. Does Paris view them as a danger?

[De Bouillane de Lacoste] Our position is clear: We welcome onto French soil those foreigners who have complied with immigration procedures and we grant political asylum to individuals who are harassed in their

own countries because of their political activities. However, as I have already told you, foreigners who violate French law must expect to bear the full consequences of their deeds. Broadly speaking, we condemn extremism and violence everywhere, be they political, religious, ethnic, or of some other nature.

[Mahroug] Within the Arab world, there are diverse approaches to the Islamist phenomenon. Governmental attitudes vary from banning or cracking down on Islamists to official recognition, with intermediate positions in between the two. In your view, what is the best way to handle the Islamist phenomenon?

[De Bouillane de Lacoste] The Arab countries are sovereign; it is not for France to advise them to adopt a particular policy to solve their domestic problems.

[Mahroug] Relations between France and the three countries of the central Maghreb—Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia—suffer from chronic instability. What is the cause of it? How can it be corrected?

[De Bouillane de Lacoste] I do not share at all your systematic pessimism. There is nothing "unstable" about our relations with each of those three countries and what I said earlier about Tunisia is valid for Morocco and Algeria.

[Mahroug] The EEC has decided to launch a new form of cooperation with Morocco involving an association treaty and a free-trade zone. Don't you think that the EEC—with France as one of its pillars—runs the risk of triggering a malaise with the other Maghreb countries by granting preferential treatment to Morocco?

[De Bouillane de Lacoste] It is not accurate to say that Morocco would receive preferential treatment since Tunisia has already been granted free-trade status for its industrial products (with a few adjustments for textiles). As for the creation of a free-trade zone with Morocco, discussions are taking place. Discussions with Tunisia will begin next month, to the best of my knowledge. Whatever the case may be, the new form of cooperation that the Community hopes to institute is Euro-Maghreb partnership. During the initial stages, the EEC plans to work with Tunisia and Morocco because their economic performances are compatible with launching such a policy. But there is no intention of favoring one country over another; we are simply initiating a policy that will eventually be extended to the entire Maghreb.

[Mahroug] The UMA [Arab Maghreb Union] will submit a memorandum to the UN Security Council calling for an end to the air embargo against Libya. How will France respond to that initiative?

[De Bouillane de Lacoste] Security Council resolution 748 requires that the sanctions imposed against Libya be reviewed every 120 days. At the last meeting on that subject, we found that Libya had not responded to any of the demands contained in resolutions 731 and 748. With regard to petitions by the French justice system, despite

assurances from the Libyan authorities of their willingness to cooperate, we have yet to receive satisfactory responses to the requests submitted by the judge in charge of the case who was recently prevented from travelling to Libya. The Libyan Government continues to evade its initial obligations and that is why France believes that it is unadvisable at this time to ease the existing program of sanctions.

[Mahroug] Tunisia, which will assume the presidency of the UMA in January, hopes to organize the "5 plus 5" summit meeting that was to have been held at the beginning of this year. Is there some chance that such a meeting will be held in 1993?

[De Bouillane de Lacoste] We hope to take part in such a summit meeting. The idea was raised by President Mitterrand during his last visit to Tunis, but we see that a number of difficulties still exist, in particular the dispute with Libya. But the "5 plus 5" initiative is very important to us and we definitely hope that Tunisia's presidency will be a success.

[Mahroug] France's visa requirement has caused a great deal of turmoil since it was enacted. In particular, the officials who handle visa applications are criticized for arbitrariness at times. How can the situation be corrected?

[De Bouillane de Lacoste] That criticism is completely unfounded. The granting of a visa is an act of sovereignty, which means that the formality of submitting a duly completed application to the consulate is a requirement but not a guarantee that a visa will be issued. I would also point out that as part of an effort to control migratory movements, stringent conditions must be applied in issuing visas. However, out of consideration for our Tunisian partners, we have instituted a number of measures aimed at facilitating access to the consulate: New buildings have been added and we have managed to eliminate the waiting line during office hours. I hope that this effort will spare Tunisians as much unpleasantness as possible as they go through this procedure, which must be understood as an ordinary administrative procedure.

REGIONAL AFFAIRS

Iraqi Elite Reportedly Emigrating to Jordan*93AE0194C London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
4 Dec 92 p 5*

[Report by the Center for Political Studies: Waves of Iraqi Immigrants to Jordan To Work and Settle Permanently"]

[Text] The Jordanian capital has recently experienced a large influx of Iraqi professors and holders of higher degrees who are seeking to settle in Jordan permanently. Reports indicate that high Jordanian authorities have instructed hospitals, universities, and agencies to employ those [Iraqis], even at the expense of Jordanian job applicants.

This step assumes certain political dimensions because it is commonly believed that Jordan has recently begun to open up to the Iraqi opposition, while it has closed its borders with Iraq and imposed a total embargo, even on certain foodstuffs that are not embargoed by the United Nations.

AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT learned that Iraqi President Saddam Husayn met last week with certain leaders of Jordanian parties loyal to Iraq and told them that, in view of Jordanian actions, borders between the two countries will not be as open as before and that Iraqi-Jordanian trade will not return to its previous levels, even if Jordanian officials so wish and even if recent measures are rescinded.

It is certain in this respect that Turkish and Iranian borders have replaced Jordanian borders for smuggling certain commodities to Iraqi markets. Strangely enough, recent visitors to Basrah have seen many goods that were smuggled from Kuwait. Asked whether the articles could have been pillaged during the invasion of Kuwait, the eyewitnesses said that the goods they inspected were new and were produced after the liberation [of Kuwait] and the withdrawal of Iraqi forces.

In another development, Jordanian sources revealed that Sa'd al-Bazzaz, editor-in-chief of AL-JUMHURIYAH of Iraq who formerly headed the Iraqi cultural bureau in London, may decide to settle in Jordan permanently and has begun working for a Jordanian daily newspaper.

The sources said that the Iraqi official has not left Amman since his arrival there some six months ago except on three occasions to conduct interviews for the newspapers. Rumor has it that al-Bazzaz, one of the more influential officials of the Iraqi ministry of information, may have left Baghdad for political reasons and is now residing in Jordan as a political refugee.

Reports indicate that 'Udayy Saddam Husayn, who acts as dean of Iraqi journalists, has recently seized the homes of all Iraqi newsmen on the pretext that they did not participate in some protest against the United States.

The reports said that he finally relented to good offices and agreed to return the homes to their owners if they walked a distance of some 40 km on foot.

It is also certain that Iraqi poet 'Abd-al-Wahab al-Bayyati, who has long resided in Madrid, Spain, as a counselor with the Iraqi embassy there, has now settled permanently in Amman, where he is employed as a counselor with the Jordanian Ministry of Education.

Talibani Criticizes UN on Lack of Swift Aid*93AE0215A London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 1 Dec 92 p 7*

[Article by Kamiran Qurrah Daghi: "Trucks With Aid for Iraq's Kurds Blown Up; Talibani Criticizes United Nations"]

[Text] Irbil, Northern Iraq—On the eve of a meeting Mas'ud Barzani and Jalal Talibani had in Salah-al-Din, northern Iraq, with Colonel Robert Young, the officer in charge of the coordination committee of the allied Western forces in Zakhu, four trucks loaded with flour and grain were blown up in Irbil nearly two hours after their arrival in a convoy of 25 trucks carrying the largest consignment of U.S. aid to Iraq's Kurds. Nobody was hurt in the incident.

Talibani criticized the United Nations, alluding to its failure to provide urgent aid to the Kurds. Meanwhile, certain Kurdish leaders accused the Iraqi authorities of planning the truck explosions.

Laurie Milroy, an expert on Iraqi affairs and a researcher at the Washington Near East Studies Institute who is now in the Iraqi Kurdistan, told AL-HAYAH that she considers the blown up trucks a "challenge to the will of President George Bush's administration and a test to how much resolve there is to aid the Kurds."

In wake of the meeting with Colonel Young and the military coordination committee members, Talibani told AL-HAYAH that he and Barzani discussed the incident and the need to speed up the delivery of humanitarian aid to Kurdistan. He criticized the United Nations, noting its inefficiency in this regard. He said that the United Nations "preoccupies itself with bureaucratic matters instead of focusing on the main issue, namely providing urgent aid to the Kurds." He expressed the belief that this bureaucracy is a "main reason behind the behavior of the Iraqi regime that misleads the United Nations and obstructs its efforts. This makes us fear that the aid will not be delivered in time and before the crisis worsens, the cold intensifies, and the roads are blocked because of snowfall."

Kurdish officials have accused the Iraqi authorities of planning destruction of the trucks, saying that time bombs were attached to the bottom of the trucks when the convoy stopped in al-Khazir, an Iraqi checkpoint on the Mosul-Irbil highway. Kamal Kirkuki, the deputy minister for humanitarian aid in the Iraqi Kurdistan Provincial Government, said that two trucks were

destroyed completely and that two other were damaged. He assured AL-HAYAH that the explosion occurred at 1850 two days ago, nearly two hours after the Turkish trucks and their drivers, also Turkish, arrived at the UN warehouse in Irbil. Kirkuki added that the convoy was stopped in al-Khazir and that the Iraqi authorities asked the drivers to go into the security building so their passports could be checked. Kirkuki said some of the drivers said that during the 20 minutes they spent at the building, they saw Iraqi soldiers wandering between the trucks. Kirkuki also said that firefighting squads rushed to the explosion site, which was cordoned off by the security forces.

The trucks had moved from Turkey to Irbil across Zakhu on the Iraqi-Turkish border, using the highway that goes through Mosul, even though it is controlled by Iraqi forces, because it is the shortest route to Irbil. The trucks made their first stop at Fayidah, which is the "border" point between Iraq and its Kurdish-controlled northern part. The trucks then stopped in Mosul to refuel before resuming their trip.

It is to be noted that Washington has criticized the United Nations for renewing the memorandum of understanding with Baghdad and has expressed the opinion that the accord has served the interest of the Iraqi Government, which has made it conditional that the United Nations purchase fuel from al-Dawrah Refinery, west of Baghdad, rather than the Kirkuk Refinery, which is adjacent to the areas controlled by Kurds. Washington has announced that it will implement its own program to supply the Kurds with food-stuffs and grain.

The Kurdish region is experiencing severe shortages of food and, especially, fuel, and it is exposed to a crisis because of last week's snowfall. The United Nations has estimated the Kurdish areas' fuel needs at 47 million liters of heating oil, whereas the Americans have estimated those needs at 147 million liters by the end of this coming March.

Kirkuki has said that Irbil alone, which has a population of 1.15 million people, needs 74 million liters during this period and that it will only get 15 million liters in accordance with the UN program. He noted that the fuel scheduled to be delivered to Irbil yesterday would bring the total volume received by this city to 3 million liters. Concluding, Kirkuki said that the UN program is enough to supply each family with just 100 liters monthly, whereas what is needed is 400 liters.

National Congress

Moreover, the Unified Iraqi National Congress (headquartered in Irbil) has accused the Iraqi authorities of blowing up the four trucks, noting that these authorities seek to obstruct Kurdish aid.

A statement issued by the congress says that it "condemns the Iraqi regime's behavior and demands that the

United Nations force (President) Saddam Husayn's regime to end its terrorist practices and to obey Resolution 688."

Statistics From Algerian Tourism Study Reported

93AF0320A Tunis REALITES in French
7 Jan 93 pp 22-23

[Article by Mohamed Bergaoui: "More Than 700,000 Algerians Visit Tunisia in 1991"]

[Text] In 1980 Tunisia received more than 400,000 Maghrebian tourists. In 1990 Tunisia received 1.4 million tourists from Libya, Algeria, Morocco, and Mauritania.

Furthermore, in 1980 the number of Maghrebian visitors only amounted to 23 percent of total entries by nonresidents. In 1990 the comparable figure rose to 43 percent and in 1991, to 64 percent.

All of these facts prove, if this were necessary, that over the years Maghrebian tourists are of growing importance in the tourist industry in Tunisia. Therefore, we will try to study, in a series of articles, the characteristics of Algerian, Libyan, and Moroccan tourists and their behavior over the past 10 years.

Entries Go Up and Down

An examination of the entries of Algerian tourists in Tunisia, over the past 10 years, brings out considerable variations, ranging from 155,800 entries in 1982 to 896,465 in 1981. Over the years the number of Algerian tourists entering Tunisia may remain the same or double. The most striking example is the difference between 1980 and 1981. The number of Algerian tourists went up from 422,511 in 1980 to 896,465 in 1982 (see table below).

Entries of Algerian Tourists in Tunisia

Year	Entries at Border	Nights at Hotels	Nights Spent
1980	422,511	153,085	281,150
1981	896,465	223,475	388,648
1982	155,800	67,076	144,878
1983	255,783	115,938	248,040
1984	468,702	195,337	388,210
1985	769,555	292,915	555,957
1986	297,506	144,474	296,540
1987	247,768	109,364	210,742
1988	412,164	147,017	251,653
1989	378,211	103,105	199,014
1990	435,209	119,862	200,494
1991	744,255	181,034	309,311

This rush of people, not only toward Tunisia, but also toward other countries, may be explained to a large extent by the approval of laws and regulations favoring the departure of Algerians for vacations in foreign countries. The difficulties previously encountered in obtaining travel documents have disappeared, little by little, and foreign exchange allocations for tourists have become rather substantial.

No doubt the improvement in political relations between the governments of the two countries is also a considerable and even substantial element in the increase in the flow of visitors. However, the decisive element remains the benefits that tourists can obtain from such visits: travel outside the country and shopping.

Before trying to explain the reasons which cause an increasingly large number of Algerians to visit Tunisia, let us study their behavior through the statistics contained in "Tourisme en chiffres" [Statistics on Tourism], an annual publication issued by the Directorate of Research and Participation in the ONTT [National Office of Tourism and Thermal Springs].

Only One-Fourth Stay in Hotels

A comparison between the number of Algerians crossing the border into Tunisia and the number of Algerians registering at Tunisian hotels reflects a substantial difference. It brings out the fact that the disproportion is in the order of one out of four. In other words, out of four Algerians visiting Tunisia, only one stays in a hotel. To cite the example of 1991 alone, we note that Algerians arriving in Tunisia during that year totaled 744,255, while only 181,000 Algerians stayed in hotels. We are tempted to ask, where did the others go? Did they stay with friends or sleep out in the open? Did they stay at rooming houses or did they leave for home on the same day that they arrived in Tunisia?

Probably, all four explanations at the same time. In the absence of serious research on the subject we are forced to make assumptions. However, one thing is sure: the average length of stay of an Algerian tourists is very short. It is slightly more than one day. To get a more precise idea, let us return to the statistics for 1991. Here we learn that 744,255 Algerians are estimated to have crossed into Tunisia. They spent a total of 309,311 nights here.

We may conclude that many Algerians, mostly in the border areas, return to their country on the same day, after visiting friends in Tunisia or taking care of errands.

We note that among those who chose to spend a longer time in Tunisia, according to the statistics of the ONTT, they spent 174,544 out of the 309,311 nights that they spent in the country in unclassified hotels, or a little more than half of the total. Then come one star hotels, where Algerians spent 45,864 nights; three star hotels, with 34,697 nights; two star hotels, with 25,042 nights; de luxe, four star hotels, 18,735 nights; and four star hotels, with 10,789 nights.

Tunis the Favorite

Another and no less interesting fact concerning Algerian tourists, who rival Libyans for first place—in terms of the number of entries—concerns the place where they wish to go. To use the language of the ONTT, the Tunis-Zaghuan region is in first place with more than one-third of the overall total number of nights spent, or 218,929 (during 1991). The Gafsa-Tozeur area is in second place with about 30,000 nights spent there. It was followed by Sousse-Kairouan, with 21,500 nights; Nabeul-Hammamet, 17,300 nights; and Monastir-Sfax, 10,500 nights spent. A good beginning for a country where the taste for tourism in the sun is only beginning to appear.

Let us look a little more deeply into the matter by analyzing in seasonal terms the breakdown of nights spent by Algerian tourists. It turns out that there is a net preference for the high season, compared to the medium and low seasons. This fact can be seen every year. Taking the same example for 1991, the ONTT statistics report 211,000 nights spent during the high season and only 98,300 nights during the low season.

Automobiles and Trains Used Most Frequently

In my view the flow of Algerian tourists during the high season is largely explained by the fact that where family travel vacations are concerned, these are always occasions dictated and imposed by the period chosen, rather than by some kind of preference for tourism in the sun.

Moreover, it is important to note that the Algerians visiting Tunisia come mostly by land, followed by air travel, and finally by sea travel.

During 1991, out of 744,225 Algerians who visited Tunisia, 695,000 came by land; 44,800, by air; and 4,400, by sea. The same tendency has been apparent every year during the course of the last 10 years.

With all of this data it is easy to determine the profile of an Algerian tourist as a person who generally comes in the summer by automobile. He prefers to visit Tunis,

where he generally spends a short time in small, unclassified hotels. His objective is to see Tunis while at the same time shopping in a city where everything is abundantly available. Food products, textiles, electrical household appliances—that is what brings in the Algerians.

GCC's al-Quwayz Calls EC Tax Prejudicial
93AE0209A London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic
2 Dec 92 pp 65-66

[Article by 'Adil Murad: "Dr. 'Abdallah al-Quwayz: Gulf Countries Will Respond to the European Position Before End of Year"]

[Text] Dr. 'Abdallah al-Quwayz, assistant secretary general for economic affairs for the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), criticized the proposed European energy tax as a "discriminatory measure" against oil. He emphasized that Gulf countries are determined to protect their national industries and to inform of this stance Europe before the end of the current year.

He emphasized to AL-MAJALLAH that the GCC states will adopt before the end of the year a unified position on trade relations with the EC [European Community] and that they expect the EC to understand their insistence on protecting their infant industries as sanctioned by GATT [General Agreement of Tariffs and Trade] and by the United Nations.

He described the proposed European energy tax as "a discriminatory measure against a specific type of energy that presently attracts most taxes." Al-Quwayz also pointed out that European fears about Gulf petrochemical industries are "exaggerated."

The following is the text of the interview:

[Murad] How will the GCC deal with the recent negative resolution by the European Parliament to turn down negotiations for the creation of a free trade zone between the two groups rather than approve the outcome of those negotiations so far?

[Al-Quwayz] We must take into account that the European Parliament represents an exigent viewpoint that must be considered when dealing with the European Community. Except for ratifying the EC's budget, its role remains limited to acting on European Community matters including trade relations with other countries and groups such as the GCC states. At any rate, contacts

are maintained with members and groups that understand the position of the GCC states and recognize the value of interdependence between the EC and the GCC states.

[Murad] What progress has been made in Gulf-European trade negotiations? What difficulties, from the Gulf viewpoint, have risen during the latest talks between the two sides?

[Al-Quwayz] The GCC states are still studying the new (second) European proposals, and their negotiating team is expected to meet shortly in order to define a unified position on those proposals and relay that position to the European Community before the end of the year. The GCC states are optimistic in this regard and expect the European Community to understand their insistence on protecting their infant industries, as sanctioned by both GATT and UN agencies. Persistence on the subject of levying a discriminatory tax on oil does not encourage the establishment of balanced economic and trade relations.

[Murad] What observations did the Gulf states make to the Europeans on the impact on oil exports of the proposed energy tax, which OPEC estimated to cost \$14 billion? What was the European response to those observations?

[Al-Quwayz] Our views on the proposed tax were repeatedly made clear to the Europeans at several of our joint meetings and discussions. We share the views of many countries of the world on the reasons for the greenhouse effect and on proposed EC measures to reduce carbon dioxide emissions.

Various environmental issues have been the focus of scrutiny and study by the GCC states. Gulf countries have effectively participated in all international conferences in order to help contribute to fruitful worldwide cooperation and to consolidate efforts towards a clean world environment. We made it clear that the greenhouse effect is a worldwide environmental phenomenon, and its speculated causes are fraught with many scientific doubts. Uncovering the true causes and their scope requires intensified and coordinated international cooperation. Such worldwide cooperation would likely lead to suitable pragmatic solutions that balance international economic growth and increased demand for energy against the associated environmental impact.

We look upon the EC's proposed unilateral tax to reduce carbon dioxide emissions as a discriminatory measure against a specific type of energy—oil—which is one of the most heavily taxed commodities during production, refining, and consumption. The EC countries lead others nations both in the multiplicity of oil taxes and in their level. There are customs taxes, consumption taxes, value-added taxes, and the proposed energy and carbon taxes. It is our opinion that such a tax, contrary to the protestations of its proponents, is a revenue measure.

That tax will have a long-range impact on the demand for petroleum, on oil's share of aggregate energy needs, and on future oil prices and revenues. It will also have a negative influence on economic growth and on investments needed to raise production in order to secure petroleum supplies.

That tax is not the optimum means to accomplish the stated objective of creating enough indicators to limit consumption and reduce carbon dioxide emissions. We in the Gulf Cooperation Council believe that true interdependence, founded on a solid base of free market forces, is the real and primary motive that should propel world economy. We also believe that the road to stable petroleum markets is through interdependence among producers and consumers and not through actions to hurt each other by excessive protection or taxation.

Independent studies on the negative economic impact of that tax far exceed European Commission estimates. The OPEC secretariat estimated that the potential effect of that tax on its members could be a decline of 1 million barrels per day in oil production and exports by the year 2000. The tax would also slash OPEC revenues by \$14 billion, thereby impacting the economies and development plans of OPEC members and inducing several other negative effects in other consumer nations and in the rest of the producers as well.

We in the GCC countries believe that this tax would have a considerable long-term impact on the volume of trade with the European Community. This will alter the course of bilateral negotiations between the two groups for a free trade agreement, thereby influencing the future of relations between the two parties in a negative way.

[Murad] What was the European response to your objections?

[Al-Quwayz] The main thrust of the European response to Gulf observations on the proposed energy and carbon tax was that the sole purpose of the proposed tax is to help safeguard the environment and reduce the greenhouse effect, that the European Community will not take any unilateral measures, and that any measures adopted will be conditioned upon similar action by other industrialized nations.

The European side is not unified on this issue, which leads to the belief that it is not a priority at present.

[Murad] The European petrochemicals industry fears unfair competition from its Gulf counterpart if it has access to [European] markets. What solutions or guarantees did the Gulf group offer to resolve this problem?

[Al-Quwayz] We showed that European fears are exaggerated and that competition would serve consumers, as well as secondary petrochemical industries, most of which are located in Europe. We encouraged [the] European petrochemicals [industry] to become partners with us in petrochemicals industries in the GCC states.

The GCC countries should have privileges comparable to any interim arrangements for European petrochemicals.

PALESTINIAN AFFAIRS

Report Describes Hebron Prison Conditions

93AE0207A London AL-QUDDS AL-'ARABI in Arabic
15 Dec 92 p 5

[Text] Bethlehem—Attorney Mary (Rook), on behalf of a number of her clients in Hebron Prison, where they were visited last Friday, reported that conditions inside the prison are worsening despite promises made by the Prison Administration and by the police minister with a view toward ending the general strike held by Palestinian prisoners last October, which lasted 17 days, in which prisoners in Hebron Prison were compelled to take a series of measures, including fasting and refusing to accept family visits, to protest this policy.

The prisoners resumed eating dinner on 2 December and breakfast on 3 December. On 9 December, to protest abusive measures pursued by the prison administration, the prisoners announced a fast and refused to meet with their relatives for a scheduled visit. The Prison Administration had promised to heat the prison before winter began, because temperatures dip below zero at night in the elevated area where the prison is located.

The lack of heating is especially serious for prisoners suffering from rheumatism and sores [qarhah].

The situation has deteriorated because the prison administration has transferred the prisoners' representative, 'Atif (Waridat), and the previous representative, Musa 'Umar, to solitary confinement in Beersheba, knowing that a basic prisoner demand during the fast was an end to this policy, which is tantamount to a slow execution.

It is known from the prisoners that the military governor visited the prison because the fast declared by the prisoners struck an emotional chord in him. However, the struggle committee at the prison refused to meet with him to protest the campaign of bad practices undertaken by the Prison Administration.

In a related development, the Israeli chief prosecutor, Menahem Finkelstein, said that the number of administrative detainees in the occupied areas fell notably between 1989 and 1992. In a talk with 12th grade students at Tel Aviv's (Zeitlin) High School, Finkelstein said that during the years ending 1 November 1989, 1990, 1991, and 1992, the number of administrative detainees recorded for those years was 1,366, 710, 449, and 223, respectively. Finkelstein said, "At the beginning of the intifadah, 20 percent of all prisoners were administrative detainees, compared with only 3 percent now."

Regarding the policy of trying soldiers, Finkelstein said: "We must implement orders. We must not permit abusive or grievous acts. To my regret, there were such acts. As a Jewish army, we must not condone such acts. Based

on internal reasons, if soldiers carry out forbidden acts against Arabs, they will ultimately carry out these acts against Jews, as well."

A student asked: "Why does the army send soldiers who are not trained in this [type of] warfare and then expect high morals from them?" Dr. Finkelstein responded: "This question would have been appropriate at the start of the intifadah. Now, every unit is specially organized and trained before being sent for operations in the occupied territories."

Regarding another question, namely, how can Israel, as a state of law, imprison the popular Lebanese [Shiite] leader, Shaykh Abd-al-Karim 'Ubayd without a special trial, even though a prisoner exchange seems remote, Finkelstein responded that he could not go into details. However, he said, "Shaykh 'Ubayd was arrested after all judicial procedures had been observed. Therefore, he is legally a prisoner in Israel."

'Extremists' Train To Fight Intifadah in Street

93AE0207B London AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI in Arabic
14 Dec 92 p 5

[Excerpts] Jerusalem—In a forest near occupied Jerusalem, a group of adolescent, civilian Jews dressed in clothing suited to strenuous training stood in formation while a professional trainer stood in front of them giving them instructions. Although they stressed that they were only a group of athletes, nothing more, their extremist appearance nonetheless reflected another dimension of the "street fighting" courses organized by Jewish extremists, which have been enshrouded in secrecy. It is said that rightist, extremist movements—for example, the Kakh movement, established by Rabbi Me'ir Kahana, who was assassinated in New York about two years ago—are behind this idea and support it. Despite the paucity of participants in these courses (about 45 activists), public opinion surveys, the most recent of which generated a controversy inside Israel itself, nonetheless highlight a rapid increase in their numbers.

QUDS PRESS quoted Barukh Ben-Yosef, 33, the founder of the Jewish Defense League in Israel—which is believed to be responsible for the Butchers Market operation in occupied Jerusalem's old city on the 16th of last November—as saying, "Every Arab should know that there is a Jew who is lying in wait for him if he attempts to throw a rock or Molotov bomb." There is a widespread belief that these groups have been formed on the model of the secret Jewish groups formed by the secret Qiryat Arba' group, which was active in the eighties. The Israeli JERUSALEM POST has reported the release from prison of members of the secret Jewish organization who, before their arrest in 1984, organized attacks against Arab mayors and fired at Hebron University students, killing three of them. Barukh Marzel, a leader of the Kakh organization, emphasized that Jews "will continue their efforts to achieve their dream of one day no longer seeing the al-Aqsa (mosque) there."

Al-Maliki Encourages Cooperation With Hamas

93AE0196A Nazareth AL-SINNARAH in Arabic
4 Dec 92 pp 14-15

[Interview with Dr. Riyad al-Maliki by Hamid Ighbariyah and Jamil Hamid; place and date not given]

[Text]

[AL-SINNARAH] The opposition has announced the formation of a front representing a number of Palestinian groups. Why have you waited until now?

[Al-Maliki] Actually, we have not formed a front. We are a group of forces and activists in the occupied lands that rejects the mode of negotiations now being conducted in Washington and that rejects the application, on the ground, of the results of those negotiations through the autonomy plan. Together, these forces and personalities have found that the time has come to form a body to confront these dangers. This body has not been announced officially because it is in the process of being formed and assessed. We have discussed convening a first meeting of about 400 Palestinian figures from the different occupied lands representing all currents, independent figures, and even organizations to discuss the matter, evaluate the situation arising from participation in the Washington negotiations, and to carefully study together ways of defending Palestinian national rights and Palestinian national constants. Moves are under way to form freedom and independence committees to provide these figures with a dynamic address.

As we watch the dangers escalating and as we see the time approaching for the imposition of that formula [resulting from the Washington negotiations] on the Palestinian people, we now feel that these forces should group together to form a strong deterrent force.

[AL-SINNARAH] The large sector of which you speak unleashed the intifadah, which has achieved a great deal. Why did they wait a full year [before forming such a group]?

[Al-Maliki] The intifadah is one thing, and negotiations are another. The intifadah and negotiations clearly contradict each other. Since 1987, the Palestinian people have agreed on the intifadah, and all Palestinian currents, groups, and sectors have participated in it. We do not differ on this issue. We believe that the intifadah has priority on the Palestinian agenda and is the foremost concern of Palestinians and the Palestinian national movement. Now, in contrast, there is something else, i.e., negotiations. Negotiations completely contradict the intifadah because they do not enjoy a Palestinian national consensus and do not achieve Palestinian constants and the slogan of the intifadah, which is freedom and independence.

[AL-SINNARAH] No political process can enjoy a national consensus. The negotiations can be rejected or

accepted in contrast to the intifadah, which has met not only with Palestinian agreement, but international and Israeli agreement as well!

[Al-Maliki] First, I agree that all issues do not have the same weight. Some issues, for example, crucial issues, require a consensus. Some issues require a majority. I believe that the current negotiations have produced results that require a consensus.

Second, I agree with the concept of the majority and the minority in the sense of the democratic process. However, before asking this front to abide by a majority opinion versus a minority opinion, democracy must first be clearly solidified in order to discuss its results. Democracy is now a slogan that is praised and promoted in the Palestinian arena, both inside and outside the occupied lands and in the PLO. However, democracy actually does not exist. Therefore, you cannot ask me to adhere to a majority decision that does not flow from sound, democratic practice.

Third, what compels me [to believe] that this is a majority decision flowing from a grassroots action based on a referendum and elections? We cannot say that the members of the Palestine National Council [PNC] represent the Palestinian people, because representation of the people must be free, direct, and democratic. Most of the PNC members were appointed, not elected. Therefore, their loyalty is not to the Palestinian people, but to whoever appointed them. When the members of the PNC and the Central Council are elected by the Palestinian people freely, directly, and democratically, that body will have the right to determine and conduct the course of negotiations by supporting or opposing them.

[AL-SINNARAH] Does that mean that you challenge the democracy and legitimacy of these organizations, which are said to represent the Palestinian people?

[Al-Maliki] What I am saying is that I am calling for democratic reforms in the organizations and bodies of the PLO and the Palestinian people to enable them to actually represent the Palestinian people as perfectly as possible. [Once such reforms are achieved,] when a decision is made, there would be a clear commitment to it.

[AL-SINNARAH] Negotiations are continuing. The PLO and the Palestinian delegation are moving toward negotiations. No one is paying attention to the Palestinian opposition. What alternative are you proposing to achieve a balance?

[Al-Maliki] Actually, as far as they concerned, there is no opposition; they are not interested in an opposition. I believe that this goes too far, relatively speaking. The Palestinian national movement, I believe, is divided between supporters and opponents [of negotiations]. This applies to both the PLO and common Palestinians. This reality exists. Now, because of the undemocratic structure inside PLO organizations of which we spoke, there has come to be a negotiating delegation and a

Palestinian leadership moving toward negotiations. The Palestinian leadership is a collective leadership. Until now, you cannot tell me that George Habash or Nayif Hawatimah and others support negotiations. When you speak of a Palestinian leadership which supports negotiations, you include them. Perhaps the way in which we have treated them as an opposition in dealing with the negotiations has made the Palestinian negotiating side believe that the opposition can be placed in a pocket or that it lacks weight.

They can continue to treat them in this manner. However, I do not believe that they will continue to do so for long.

Why? Because "the matter has come to a head." In no case can the opposition continue to remain a civilized opposition that just says no. There is a body of Palestinian national activists and forces opposed to that approach. The start of strong pressure to listen to the opposition voice in the occupied land will in itself be an unraveling. Within a brief period, I have heard that members of the Palestinian delegation—during their meetings with the Americans, Israelis, and Arabs—are suggesting that the Palestinian opposition is daily becoming stronger on the Palestinian scene and that some achievements must be made [in negotiations] to prevent the opposition from controlling the scene. This in itself is recognition of the opposition's strength.

[AL-SINNARAH] Is there a Palestinian conspiracy against the Palestinian cause?

[Al-Maliki] I am not saying that a Palestinian conspiracy exists to eliminate the Palestinian cause. No indications would support that view. However, some Palestinian parties and individuals have a particular view of the nature of a solution. They want to convey this angle to the Palestinian people. They are using the Americans, Israelis, and Arabs to convey it, and this destroys the gains of the intifadah.

Anything achieved by negotiations will not benefit the Palestinian people and will completely contradict the intifadah and its goals. Therefore, it is clear that negotiations will function to position our people as a minority without a government. Our people will thus become extinct, as have other peoples, without enjoying freedom, independence, and sovereignty.

[AL-SINNARAH] How will you demonstrate your opposition?

[Al-Maliki] Anything is possible. Sunday 29 November saw a strike day called by resistance groups. On 23 September, there was a strike to express opposition to participation in the Washington negotiations. The entire Palestinian public observed it. One can speak of a call to strike, and this policy has begun to work. There are seminars, broad-based conferences, press conferences, publications distributed to the public reflecting these forces' position, and home visits.

[AL-SINNARAH] Islamic currents are present on the Palestinian scene. Do you have contacts with them? Do you have an agreed position with them regarding negotiations?

[Al-Maliki] The Islamic current pervades the entire Palestinian scene. It extends into the masses, reflecting the reality of Palestinian society. It is not limited to political society. Therefore, close contact, mixing, and discussion—centered in Hamas, Islamic Jihad, and several other organizational activists—have existed for a long time. These activists have their [different] programs, aspirations for the future, and method of operation. They find common ground with the opposition as a whole in their opposition to the current political process, autonomy, and the danger posed by autonomy. Efforts should be made to form a more strongly functioning body based on this common ground, which exists despite other points of disagreement. Hamas is a force present in the street. It has its weight and impact. It would be foolish to ignore its influence. If you want greater influence, you must coordinate with Hamas. Therefore, there is a need to coordinate with Hamas. One cannot meet this need by wagering immutable foundations, which are based on Palestinian cohesion, the lifeblood and most important of which is the PLO. If there is common ground regarding this point, so be it. If not, we are not at all willing to concede the PLO in exchange for anything else. I maintain that no alternative exists to the PLO. We will defend it with all our might. If Hamas wishes to enter the PLO framework, we will facilitate that, but not on the terms that the Hamas movement is proposing. It is in the public interest that Hamas be in the PLO, but not on the terms that Hamas has put forth.

[AL-SINNARAH] What is your opinion regarding the belief held by some that your participation with members of the Palestinian delegation in conferences and discussions in the internal arena legitimizes the Palestinian delegation's continuation in its present course? Will the 10 groups opposed to the Washington negotiations decide to boycott the Palestinian delegation?

[Al-Maliki] Regarding the first point, I believe that there is an advantage and a disadvantage to meeting with the negotiating party. The main advantage is that we can lay bare its pretensions and weakness. The public can benefit from that. The disadvantage of attendance [at such conferences and discussions] is that it grants recognition to this delegation. I do not deny the existence of a Palestinian delegation negotiating in Washington. It represents a segment of the Palestinian people and leadership. However, it denies a part of itself as a Palestinian totality. We will deal with it as something that exists.

Regarding the second point, the Palestinian delegation always tries to point out to the opposition that the opposition is obliged to support the delegation and that no problems exist. We reject that formulation. We always maintain that we will deal with the situation based on the national interest.

When foreign delegations come wishing to meet with leading figures, they want to meet with the Palestinian people, not just members of the delegation [to the Washington negotiations], to discuss different subjects, including negotiations. Faysal al-Husayni discusses negotiations, and I discuss why we are compelled to oppose negotiations and what we are proposing. However, if matters go beyond that, to exploitation of the situation in favor of the negotiators alone and to an attempt to exclude the opposition from these meetings [with foreign delegations], we will begin to talk about a political separation, which is very dangerous. Therefore, in order to find a common denominator of Palestinian national unity, we constantly reiterate that we always need dialogue and sitting down together, that we recognize others' right to propound and defend an opinion, and that we acknowledge the existence of different activists [ijtihadin] on the Palestinian scene.

Even if we differ, we certainly work together within that difference to preserve national unity, common ground, and a common denominator. Therefore, even now, it is not difficult for the Palestinian leadership to take it upon itself to sit down to coordinate and discuss differences among the different activists to arrive at the common interest of national unity, ways that we can preserve [common] denominators, the red lines that cannot be crossed, and the time to be allotted to a given effort. If we agree within the terms that define this relation, we can take positive steps to consolidate national unity. This requires a decision by the leadership to demonstrate its commitment to preserving national unity as the top priority of Palestinian nationalism. Then, we can say that we have transcended the danger.

[AL-SINNARAH] What would happen if negotiations stopped now?

[Al-Maliki] I believe that we must work to reestablish national unity, support the intifadah, improve the Palestinian situation in the interior and abroad, and better convince world public opinion of the Palestinian cause and Palestinian rights. We must sit down and reset our priorities. Responding to the needs of the Palestinian public should be a priority of our activity. Also, we must infuse PLO organizations and bodies with democratic practice and infuse the occupied land with a democratic spirit. We must work to build Palestinian organizations, infrastructure, and self-government. We must train human resources in the occupied lands and at many other levels.

[AL-SINNARAH] All of these nice matters of which you speak will be carried out under occupation. However, the intifadah's basic goal is to end the occupation. You maintain that the intifadah has not ended the occupation and that negotiations have ruined the intifadah's gains.... Will we return to the same point? How can the occupation be ended?

[Al-Maliki] Negotiations have not been and will not be able to end the occupation. Nor can the intifadah end the

occupation, because there is an Arab and international dimension. This is a key issue. As soon as we go back into it, to better formulate Palestinian priorities, and say that we will give our political and nonpolitical support to the intifadah, we will revitalize the intifadah and be able to take steps toward freedom and independence. The intifadah's goal is to remove the occupation and establish a state. By focusing on the intifadah, we will approach that goal. We—the scapegoat of negotiations—must all sit down. Even if we are not as such, it is necessary to retreat in order to sit down.

[AL-SINNARAH] Is the Palestinian leadership afraid to assess the intifadah, because there are matters that might result in its condemnation in front of the people?

[Al-Maliki] I believe that, if the Palestinian leadership has avoided assessing the Palestinian intifadah, the time will come when a Palestinian generation will make the leadership accountable for this avoidance. It is in the interest of the Palestinian cause, leadership, and public that there be an ongoing, tireless process of evaluation, because the intifadah is ongoing and creates new things. If a mistake emerges, it can be assessed easily. However, if it persists, the cost of correcting it will be enormous. Revenge is a part of it, liquidations are a part of it, thefts, and other parts—we are paying the price for them, because we have refused as a leadership to sit down and bear responsibility in the evaluation process.

Al-Tamimi on Ulema's Goals, Funding, Politics

93AE0177A Amman *AL-RIBAT in Arabic*
18 Nov 93 p 11

[Interview With Shaykh Taysir al-Tamimi, deputy chairman of the Executive Council of the Palestine Ulema League, by Khalid al-Maghribi in Amman; date not given: "Shaykh al-Tamimi to AL-RIBAT: Palestine Ulema League Seeks To Preserve Status of Ulema, Strengthen Their Role"]

[Text] Shaykh Taysir al-Tamimi, deputy chairman of the Palestine Ulema League Executive Council, has visited Amman in recent weeks, and AL-RIBAT has interviewed him to get acquainted with the league's objectives and activities.

[Maghribi] How would you introduce the Palestine Ulema League to the Jordanian reader?

[Tamimi] The idea behind the Palestine Ulema League is an old one that the ulema considered to unite their ranks and to take care of their affairs. The idea was crystallized at the blessed al-Aqsa Mosque on 2 July 1982. The foundation of the league was announced at a ceremony attended by a number of learned people, including university professors, preachers, magistrates, lecturers, and mosque imams, and league goals and objectives were declared. Our Palestinian kinsmen have received foundation of the league with satisfaction and welcome. As for league objectives, they are:

- Revive the ulema's pioneer role and preserve their lofty status.

- Perform the duties of calling to God, promoting virtue, and prohibiting vice.
- Safeguard the ulema's rights.
- Strengthen intellectual and social bonds between learned people.
- Work to establish good relations with the Palestinian people, both Muslims and Christians.
- Enhance the ulema's standard by organizing training courses and educational scholarships.
- Deal with the nation's issues and provide needed religious rulings.
- Cooperate with all educational institutions inside and outside Palestine to accomplish these objectives.
- Strengthen bonds and exchange knowledge with other ulema in the Islamic world.
- Form reconciliation committees to settle disagreements and disputes and to implant the concepts of brotherhood and love among the people.

After the foundation of the league was announced, a main office was established for it in Jerusalem. A provisional executive council has been elected until all measures are completed in accordance with the league constitution. The executive council has done a great deal, establishing league branches in a number of Palestinian cities and forming the main religious rulings committee, branch religious rulings committees, advocacy committees, and reconciliation committees.

The league has issued a religious ruling on the Palestinian charitable lottery and conducted a religious study on the adoption of children from Bosnia and Hercegovina. It has also issued a magazine on the tragedy of Muslims in Bosnia and Hercegovina and on dimensions of the conflict in those countries.

The league recently issued a religious ruling on the olive alms, especially since we are in the olive harvest season.

The league is working to establish an Islamic research college devoted to Islamic heritage and to Islamic studies and research.

[Maghribi] What sources finance the league activities?

[Tamimi] The league relies on its members' subscriptions, plus grants and donations.

[Maghribi] Throughout the course of the struggle on Palestine's soil, Palestinian ulema have played a prominent role in confronting occupation and leading the masses. What is the league's position in light of the accelerating [peace] settlement process?

[Tamimi] To date, the league has taken no specific position on developments of the Palestinian issue. But what can be said is that the Palestine Ulema League is a part of the Palestinian people, the majority of whom reject the negotiations with the Jewish enemy.

[Tamimi] In Recent months, the Palestinian arena has seen confrontations between Fatah and Hamas. Has the league played a role to reconcile them?

[Tamimi] The league has played a role and contributed to put an end to these feuds, and it has worked to bolster national unity and to unite the efforts against the Zionist occupation.

[Maghribi] With the onset of the league activities, the occupation authorities summoned a number of the league's constituent council members. What is the background in this regard?

[Tamimi] The occupation authorities summoned a large number of constituent council members with the objective of finding out what the league goals and objectives are and what kind of members it has.

Israeli Study: 30 Percent of Palestinians Poor

93AE0177B Amman AL-RIBAT in Arabic
18 Nov 92 p 11

[Article: "30 Percent of 1948 Palestinians Live Below Poverty Line"]

[Excerpts] It has been recently revealed that nearly 562,000 people live below the poverty line in the Palestinian territories occupied in 1948, including 235,000 children. A report published by the National Insurance Organization shows that the poverty phenomenon is widespread in the Arab environment and that 40 percent of those who live below the poverty line are Arabs. An examination of the data contained in the Israeli Central Statistics Department's annual report on population numbers, published last June, shows that Arabs living below the poverty line represent 28.36 percent of the total Arab population of the occupied Palestine, numbering 792,400 people. The report also notes that these percentages and figures are rising constantly. [passage omitted]

Knesset member Talab al-Sani', from the Arab Democratic Party, has said that unemployment devours the national insurance appropriations and is a main cause of poverty. In a related development, it was revealed yesterday how much discrimination in terms of government jobs is experienced by Palestinians in the occupied Palestine. The head of the Israeli Civil Service Commission said that of 50,000 employees working in the government sector, only 1,500 are Arabs. This intensifies the hardship of Arabs living in the territories occupied in 1948, especially with growing unemployment and with Jews given priority in the various work sectors.

Economist: 42 Percent Unemployment in Territories

93AE0177C London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
4 Dec 92 p 12

[Article by Salah Hazin: "Dean of al-Najah University's School of Economics in Nabulus: Palestinian Economy

Has Become Subservient to Israeli Economy; 42 Percent Unemployment in Occupied Territories"]

[Text] Amman—Dr. 'Abd-al-Fattah Abu-Shukr has estimated unemployment in the occupied Palestinian territories by the end of 1991 at 42.5 percent.

The dean of al-Najah University's School of Economics in the occupied city of Nabulus has said that there are nearly 32,000 unemployed workers in the West Bank and Gaza Strip because they have not been permitted to return to their jobs in Israel since the end of the Gulf war. This army of unemployed has been joined by 10,000 more workers who have returned from Kuwait and other Gulf states and who bear West Bank identity cards, not to mention 11,000 more unemployed in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip because of worsening economic conditions.

The dean has said that nearly 62,000 Palestinian citizens suffer from partial unemployment, which Israel covers up and omits from its data because this unemployment represents people who are absent from their jobs temporarily, not to mention Palestinian detainees, who amounted to 20,000 in 1991 and who will find themselves among the unemployed looking for work when they are released from Israeli jails.

In a working paper submitted to an ESCWA [Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia] symposium held in Amman two days ago, on the day of solidarity with the Palestinian people, Dr. Abu-Shukr said that this percentage, not Israeli statistics that estimate unemployment among Palestinian workers at 12.1 percent at the end of 1991, reflects the true unemployment situation in the occupied territories.

Dr. Abu-Shukr added that the existing condition is in harmony with the economic objectives of the Israeli economic policy since 1967, considering that this policy has sought to impede the development of a viable and independent Palestinian economy and has tried at the same time to attach the occupied Palestinian territories' economy to the Israeli economy, to make it subservient to the latter economy, and to exploit its human and economic resources. Dr. Abu-Shukr concluded that this policy has destroyed the infrastructure of the occupied Palestinian territories' economy.

Dr. Abu-Shukr also spoke about the changes introduced by the Israeli economic policy into the various sectors of the Palestinian economy, saying that from 1968 to 1985, the agricultural sector's contribution to the GDP [gross domestic product] dropped from 34 percent to 20 percent, and its workforce dropped from 38.7 percent in 1970 to 22.8 percent in 1987. The trade sector has been stagnant and has not developed, considering that its contribution to the GDP ranged between 7 percent and 9 percent from 1967 to 1991 and its contribution to employment ranged from 14 percent to 16 percent.

In the commercial sector, which has been totally subservient to the Israeli economy, Palestinian exports to Israel

in 1989 amounted to 79 percent of the total Palestinian exports, and Palestinian imports from Israel amounted in the same year to 91.5 percent of the total Palestinian imports.

Dr. Abu-Shukr noted other aspects of structural deficiency in the Palestinian economy, including the lack of financial infrastructure, such as lending banks and other banking facilities that form the basis of the economic and social development process, not to mention the fact that the absence of these financial institutions has deprived the occupied territories of numerous work opportunities that could have been provided, especially to university graduates, who constitute a large percentage of the unemployed.

He added that all of this has led to a deteriorating infrastructure, including power, road, communication, and water networks and postal and telephone services, which are a source for the creation of numerous employment opportunities.

The dean of al-Najah University's School of Economics has cited figures on the size of Palestinian labor employed in Israel, estimating it at 128,000 workers, of whom 50.5 percent are from the West Bank, 33.7 percent from the Gaza Strip, and nearly 15.7 percent from East Jerusalem. He said that 59.5 percent of this labor is employed in the Israeli construction sector, 11.7 percent in the agricultural sector, 10.4 percent in the industrial sector, and 18.4 percent in other sectors.

In his paper, Dr. Abu-Shukr devoted space to the developments in the Palestinian labor market since 1987, i.e., the year of the Palestinian intifadah [uprising], the escalating immigration of Soviet Jews to Israel, and the Gulf crisis, which resulted in the return of nearly 30,000 Palestinian workers from Kuwait and the Gulf states. He said that Jewish immigration to Israel from the former Soviet Union has included mostly highly educated immigrants who would not have affected the Palestinian labor market in Israel if it had not been for a 10.6 percent inflation rate in 1990 and for the eruption of the Gulf war, which compelled numerous Russian immigrants to replace Palestinian labor.

Dr. Abu-Shukr said that 70 percent of the Palestinians working in Israel returned to their jobs a year after the Gulf war and that the rest have joined the army of unemployed.

As for the Gulf crisis, it has returned nearly 30,000 Palestinian workers from Kuwait and the Gulf states to the Palestinian labor market, which had been suffering from unemployment in the first place, according to the estimate of the Israeli labor coordinator in the occupied Palestinian territories.

EGYPT

Youths Discuss Fears of New U.S. Administration

93AF0211B Cairo AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic
6 Nov 92 p 3

[Article: "Clinton's Victory A New Beginning for United States"]

[Text] The overwhelming victory of Bill Clinton, 46, over President George Bush in the American elections became the hot topic in Egypt, in particular among the youths, who think that Clinton's administration will be a new beginning for the United States and that it is a sign indicating that the new generation is currently in charge of the world's superpower. The Egyptians youth, when asked by AL-JUMHURIYAH about the elections, recalled the victory of John F. Kennedy during the 1960's.

Trying To Please the Jews

Wa'il Mahir, a researcher in Cairo University's media department, said that a politician should not be judged on his appearance and his attractiveness. Since this politician is the president of the world's largest country, there should be objective criteria for analyzing the circumstances that bring him to power. The political platform of Mr. Clinton is full of vocabulary that does not put Arabs at ease, such as his full support for Israel in its negotiations with the Arab parties and his very clear talk about the position of Jerusalem under Israel's authority and his desire to please the Jewish lobby.

As for his first impression of Clinton, Mahir said that a delay in the peace process in the Middle East is expected, or at least the positions of the negotiating parties will not be the same as during the Bush Administration. As for his domestic political platform, Clinton is to the relative left of Bush. This could have a positive effect for American citizens, who suffered harsh, if not deteriorating, economic conditions during the past 12 years under Republican administrations.

Mahir asserted that the election of Clinton, who is only 46 years old, did not strongly depend on some criteria considered by others to be essential, such as age, which is sometimes considered to be a synonym for experience and being tested in battle. On the other hand, we have to ask ourselves who Clinton is, how much he spent on his political campaign, and how many young men in the "democratic United States" could spend that much money on a campaign to introduce themselves to the people, as Clinton did.

Handsome and Appearance

'Ashraf 'Abdallah Suwaylam, a third-year student in the faculty of economics and political science, said that he noticed that the U.S. president-elect paid close attention to his appearance and his youth, which became his most important asset during his campaign. Clinton also took advantage of his resemblance to the late President

Kennedy. The conditions that led to his victory included the economic situation, the collapse of the Soviet Union, and his success in his political platform, which concentrated on unemployment, the national deficit, and similar problems. He also made promises of change.

As Arabs, we are afraid of the statements he made during his campaign regarding occupied Jerusalem.

Sure of Himself

The same opinion is held by 'Ahmad Sa'id 'Abdu, a third-year student in the faculty of engineering, who said that Clinton was very sure of himself and depended on his youth, enthusiasm, and handsomeness. On the other hand, the American people were looking for a change for the better and, in fact, Clinton's victory was mainly because of his emphasis on domestic change.

Their colleague Khalid Muhammad 'Abd-al-Rahman, a third-year student in the faculty of international trade, said that Clinton has a very good personality and that he is a very good public speaker. He managed to attract attention to him, especially when he appeared playing music and working out during the campaign.

Another John Kennedy

Tariq Sa'id, a third-year student in the faculty of pharmacology at Cairo University, added another reason for Clinton's victory. In addition to being handsome and young, the American people liked his resemblance to late President John F. Kennedy. They wanted him to renew the Kennedy era.

Sa'id said he thinks that Clinton does not have enough experience in the field of international politics.

'Amr Ahmad al-Fayyumi, who earned a bachelor of science degree in accounting in 1992, said he thinks that the age of the president-elect will not affect his political personality. He added that in spite of Clinton's resemblance to Kennedy, he is very different, especially because the United States was more powerful under Kennedy.

He added that Clinton would not be able to follow the steps of Kennedy, especially because there are more economic powers that compete with the United States and control the international market. As for his international policy, his statements do not put the Arabs at ease, especially because he is pro-Israel.

At the American University at Cairo, the results of the American elections were the main topic of discussion among the students.

Majid al-'Asar, a second-year student in the computer science department, said that the president-elect does not have the experience of President Bush, who was very successful. It is enough that he managed to bring the Arabs and the Israelis to the negotiating table. We would

have hoped that Bush would have stayed in power. The proverb goes: "What you know is better than what you do not know."

Al-'Asar added that his American colleagues like Clinton and strongly support him.

Sharin Sharif Murad, talked about Clinton's personality, his self-confidence and his determination to face the challenges. She learned that he considers Kennedy to be a role model from a television film clip about their meeting. She also thinks that the fact that he plays music and works out [passage missing from original]

Nihad Fahmi, a student in the faculty of commerce, said that we have to consider that the Republicans stayed in power for 12 years and that the American people like change. There are also justifications for the change. The Bush administration concentrated on the international arena and made historical accomplishments for the American position in the world.

Impediment to Peace

'Amr Mahmud, a first-year student in the faculty of commerce at Cairo University, said that he did not like the fact that Clinton won the election, because Clinton's main concern is domestic politics and he will neglect international affairs. Clinton is also pro-Israel, a fact that will impede the peace process.

His colleague, Ahmad Rashad, shared his opinion but he added that both Bush and Clinton work to protect American interests.

Sharif Lutfi, of the commerce faculty, had a different opinion. He said that Clinton wants to wash his hands of the Middle East's problems. This would give us a chance to solve our problems ourselves.

'Abir Hussayn Muhammad, a third-year student in the media department, said she thinks that Clinton has his advantages and disadvantages. He is young and enthusiastic, and he understands the problems of his country. Marwa Sha'ban, a first-year student in English literature, expressed her fear that Clinton would meet the same end as Kennedy. They have many similar characteristics. They are both handsome, and it seems that they have the same enthusiasm.

IRAQ

SURAQIYA Article on Opposition Reprinted

93AE0183A Baghdad AL-'IRAQ in Arabic 19 Nov 92
p 3

[Commentary: "The Partition Opposition...the Salah-al-Din Conference Revealed Their Identities"—paragraphs in italics are AL-'IRAQ editor's notes]

[Text] *The magazine SURAQIYA, published in London, printed an article titled The Partition Opposition in issue No. 482 on 9 November 1992. The article containing an*

opinion on what was called the "opposition conferences" that have begun to be held regularly with the support of the United States and the Zionist entity. The article appeared after the Salah-al-Din Conference, which was to conclude what had been done in the Vienna Conference and which held because Jalal al-Talabani received American and Zionist instructions to hold it.

The article—the magazine's cover story, reprinted by AL-'IRAQ—indicates that "the Salah-al-Din Conference has revealed their identities" so that readers may know these identities, linked by nothing but the fact that they are reprehensible and heterogenous. So we leave it with the contents of the article, which represents the viewpoint of its author, who lives in Britain.

For more than a year and a half—that is, since the war of the eastern Gulf—the American administration has been avidly gathering up Iraqi individuals from here and there, who, for their own public or private reasons—economic, political, or social—differ with Iraq. The Americans have offered them aid, assigning them the goal of "ousting the regime."

Because they are merely citizens whose whims, or interests, have differed with the government or who have changed their convictions, and because they represent no one but themselves and those who brought them together, it was necessary to give them all kinds of aid, material and moral, and to invent a theory for them and make them support the American interests, which worked intensively to destroy the elements of the life of the Iraqi state and to pressure them with a starvation blockade and which now demand the government's head.

Thus, what is called the "Iraqi opposition" was gathered together from leftovers. It has held more than one conference to make itself known, and its conferences have aimed at organizing itself and coordinating the contradictions of its members and their groups.

Frequently one or more members at these conferences have wondered about some of the names of the participants and had suspicions about just how Iraqi they are, because no one has heard their names before. Although there are others who know people, and we know the people of Iraq, some of whom we respect.

In principle, we are not against this or that opposition. In every Arab country, there is an opposition that confronts the government. Opposition, in our view and according to our convictions, has one specific meaning: freedom and its democratic birth. As long as citizens are citizens, it is their most basic right, as well as their duty, to differ with the regime and oppose it. The absence of an opposition means only the absence of freedom and democracy, and the absence of freedom and democracy means only that the society—any society—is truly sick and needs a dose of opposition medicine to cure it of its illness and wake it up.

However, an opposition that grows from the reality of the society, from the conditions of its life and the convictions of its citizens, is one thing, and an opposition put together from all directions and from every vested interest is another thing. What is even more different and worse than that is when an opposition is created by a foreign power for a foreign purpose as part of the "game of nations," which became famous in the book of the late Miles Copeland.

And so in principle, we are not against the Iraqi Government having opponents. We view any opposition grown from the reality of Iraq and its own soil with respect and esteem, whether we agree with it or differ with it, as may be the case.

But from what the daily news tells us, these are groups with diverse tendencies, with nothing in common but hostility toward the Iraqi Government for personal, American, or Israeli reasons, with no theory but to topple this government and no aim but to do as they are told and comply obediently—we almost said "submissively"—to do what the war, filthy in both its means and its aims—could not do or left for them to do!

We are not fans of the Iraqi Government. We have differences with it: national and pan-Arab differences, not American or Israeli differences. There is a big difference between the two. It is the difference between being Arab or not, between being a spy or a citizen.

It is clear that the Iraqi Government, in its national aspiration—aside from the war of the Eastern Gulf—was targeted by America and "Israel" for many reasons. Iraq dared to build its self-sufficiency and violated two sacred things: oil and the Sykes-Picot borders, which were drawn by the old imperialists and inherited and reaffirmed by the new imperialists!

Because Iraq was targeted, they destroyed its military power as they kept up—with a hatred for history, the Arabs, the region, its culture, and what it has given—that continuing conspiracy, with the Sykes-Picot borders as its foundation, the new names imposed by circumstances, and the ban on building up military and economic self-sufficiency, so that the Arabs would remain in a state of subordination, with their resources plundered.

Let us go back to the Iraqi opposition.

Was it for the sake of Iraq that these elements were brought together and combined? Many of them are anonymous. Or was it for America and "Israel" and by their will? Did they meet to protect Iraq and establish democracy that the opposition's voice was raised, or was it to tear Iraq apart and partition it?

Let us try to have a quick look at three episodes that relate to their activities and aims:

First: A few months ago, elements said to oppose the Iraqi Government met in Vienna. Their meeting received money from foreign media coverage that has

also been received by opposition groups in many Arab countries, more rooted in the soil and better at expressing their rejection.

Second: Then the opposition members moved quickly to Washington to take commemorative, historic pictures with America's then-Secretary of State James Baker. They also received aid and support that national opposition movements do not generally get.

It is incumbent upon national oppositions to be national and not to take orders from abroad or to mix their national goal with a hostile foreign goal.

The Iraqi opposition, however, has deviated from all customary practice, going openly to Washington to acquire legitimacy, without acquiring national legitimacy from inside Iraq. They returned from Washington to say that they opposed the regime, offering no reasons for their opposition other than what they were told to say!

Third: Let us glance at this oddly assembled opposition and the newest American inventions it was assigned and to which it acceded.

At the meeting of the opposition wings that were brought together in the Kurdish region of Iraq, with foreign protection, the participants decided to form a tripartite leadership, reflecting the desired partition of Iraq. There was a representative of each group: the Kurds, the Sunnis, and the Shi'ites.

What they call national opposition does not square with the partition of the nation. What they call democracy does not square with the imposition of a future formula on its people. What they call patriotism is contradicted by their meeting in the shadow of the foreigner's spear, his protection, and his funding.

The strangest thing this opposition seeks is military support for its demand to topple the Iraqi regime—from neighbors! If we put aside what this means in the dictionary of any politics, and to whatever leaning—rightist or leftist, the very demand for military support from neighbors strips it of legitimacy, of any claim to opposition, just as it strips it of national legitimacy—let alone how it exposes its weakness and submission.

In the last opposition meeting, overseen by George Bush, the commander of the war of the Eastern Gulf, the opposition said that it was suffering a financial deficit. It demanded arms, military aid, and recognition for its government, prior to its legitimacy. Nothing remains for this opposition to complete its construction and its triumph, except to demand land—any land—upon which to establish a government, even symbolically, in order those who are establishing it to acknowledge it. Then the stream of financial aid would pour in—the true aim of all those who were brought together under foreign protection in the shadow of its spear!

Poor Iraq, chosen to teach a lesson of servility and submission to the Arab people and the people of the Third World.

Were there not a dream, a venture, a mutiny, and a higher goal, this opposition would not have been founded. Indeed, the West is silent despite its repression, with iron and fire, as it is silent despite those in the prisons of the Arab governments. No one hears a sound from them, or a sound on their behalf. Perhaps they have no chance to live. Only the Iraqi opposition is fortunate enough to have Western aid, thanks to its need to use [the opposition], possibly to justify what befell Iraq and to grant legitimacy to a crime!

The responsibility of the Iraqi opposition is not that it uses a cover for what is to come in Iraq. Its responsibility is for what is to come in the whole region, and on top of all this is its responsibility for the crime—the crimes—of the war of the eastern Gulf it wants to cover up. Thus the Iraqi opposition, by hiring itself out to American and Israeli policies, is serving an objective beyond Iraq and a policy beyond the borders of Iraq, which must be partitioned. It covers the crime that affects the entire Arab world, its future, and its people. Does the Iraqi opposition mean that, or, with its narrow horizons, the resources that pour in, and its dream of government under American and Israeli feet, is it just gambling on anything, at any price?

We are not defending the Iraqi Government here, nor are we defending any other Arab government. We are defending an ethical concept of opposition, a democratic concept of opposition, a patriotic concept of opposition. To make a possible and clear comparison, try to imagine the British Labor Party meeting in Kuwait, for example, or in any other oil country, with its leaders demanding salaries from it and then talking about the need to wipe out the Conservative Party or change the national government in Britain. Let us imagine the U.S. Democratic Party requesting aid from the Al-Sabah family, or its leaders meeting in Panama before Noriega was deposed to demand that Bush be pushed out and replaced. Of course, this is a caricature, but it is less of a cartoon than the picture of the Iraqi opposition meeting under the protection of the whole imperialist West, in the shadow of its military forces and aircraft, to raise its voice in opposition to the Government of Iraq, when it knows very well that if it were to attain power, as it seeks to do, it would only gain what was gained by all those who ruled their nations with a foreigner's spear—whose people threw them on the garbage heaps of history!

Certainly if I were Iraqi, and truly in opposition, I would be a Saddam Husayn, the image of a patriotic hero, and put up my picture with all my will to live, and shout "Yes" and "No."

"Yes" to everything Iraqi and pro-Iraq.

"No" to all that is foreign, and in support of foreign interests and realizing foreign goals.

"Yes" to Iraq and Saddam Husayn, even if I disagree with him, but not with Iraq. Which Iraq would it be? Under the shoes of the Americans and the Israelis or

those worthless hirelings who seek power at any price, even the price of their honor and the honor of their people?

Is this all?

Not at all. There is still much to tell about them, to make us laugh and cry.

The Iraqi opposition meeting, which called for democracy and the Iraqi people's right to self-determination—what determination?—had barely ended when Turkish forces crossed the Iraqi border. The participants in the conference had not yet left its territory to circulate through the earth and find their living, as these forces penetreated deep into northern Iraq, where in the shadow of al-Talabani's and Barazani's rule over the Kurds, they struck at the Kurds and slaughtered their national dream.

The Iraqi opposition made no sound as it witnessed further occupation of national soil and the violation of national honor!

What happened to this opposition? How can it justify itself and its opposition? How, for that matter, can it absolve itself of the charge of collusion with foreigners?

If we set aside the opposition and its sectarian wings and pose the same question to the Kurdish leaders, how could they justify the Turkish attack and the death of hundreds of Kurds? Why isn't their ringing voice filling the earth, shouting about the violation of human rights?

And what about imperialist hypocrisy, speaking of the rights of the Kurds to confront Iraq but silent on their right to confront Turkey?

Or the United Nations, selecting and rejecting as it likes, raising its voice loudly when it wants, and keeping silent about what it chooses to, forgetting what it spoke of in the past?

This poor Iraqi opposition, and even poorer democracy, principles, and human rights, which they sanction one day and forbid the next, to say nothing of the sanction and the ban in the same bed!

May God help Iraq and the people of Iraq, and those who are patient with prostitution: American prostitution, and the prostitution of some of its Arab clients.

Opposition Figure on Democracy, Federation, Unity

93AE0198A London *AL-HAYAH* in Arabic 11 Dec 92
p 10

[Article by Nabil Yasin, "an Iraqi writer and poet residing in Britain": "Partition of Iraq Not a Solution to its Unity Problem; Conference of Dangerous Precedents in Irbil"]

[Text] The Irbil conference has established, for the greater part of the opposition, dangerous precedents for

the political future of Iraq by pursuing a system of states, or federalism, for a historically, politically, geographically, culturally, and economically unified country, to say nothing of the unity of its human population. We say a historically unified country, but this natural unity does not negate the absence of national and sectarian rights that has prevailed and still does prevail in Iraq. The reason for its absence is not the unity of the country, but the absence of democracy and the nature of the existing political system. The opposition may wish to build a democratic system, but federalism will only tear Iraq apart, allowing national or tribal tyranny in one type of federalism, and political tyranny in others. So, what conflicts with political democracy is the establishment of a political order on nationalist, tribal, religious, and sectarian bases. The rhetorical insistence upon democracy in the conference's communiqués and resolutions might be interpreted as the actual, not only the formal, acknowledgement of the practice of democracy and the practical recognition of the national rights of the Kurdish people and of religious rights in Iraq side-by-side with the recognition of the political rights of all Iraqis, without distinction or exception.

The Kurdish people had no aspiration other than genuine autonomy for them to enjoy their national, political, and cultural rights within the framework of Iraqi authority. Iraqis want only justice to govern their religious practice, which the government legally acknowledges. Now they both erect on the rubble of a ruined, destroyed Iraq, what is still the language of mass executions on the part of its rulers, with which they threaten the people after every uprising, movement, demonstration, or protest. Would a system of states solve the problem of repression, destruction, and daily terrorism, the problem of the gallows and the prisons? When was Iraq ever a country that abided by a system of states? The majority of religious individuals that attended the conference, making up 24 percent, views the system of states as Islamic. When Iraq was conquered in the era of Caliph 'Umar Bin-al-Khattab, may God be pleased with him, it was conquered as a unified country under Sassanian rule. Basra and al-Kufah were founded by the Arabs as two metropolises for fighting. They were two of seven metropolises, including Medina, Damascus, Egypt, the Arabian peninsula, and Bahrain, which were part of the central Islamic empire in Medina, then in al-Kufah, and then Damascus. None of these big cities had political councils determined by the central authority. The center controlled all legislative and executive power. Iraq was quickly united as a single state under Umayyad rule; a single governor was appointed to it. The Iraqis remember Al-Hajjaj Bin-Yusuf al-Thaqafi as governor over Iraq, not over al-Kufah or Wasit. After the founding of Baghdad, Iraq became the center of the Islamic state at its height. The Ottomans weakened the center of Iraq by partitioning it into three vilayets [Ottoman "states"], despite the fact that the vilayet of Baghdad was the primary one and the most influential. Their motive was to weaken Iraq as the cradle of movements opposed to them, to gain control over it by partitioning it to distance

it from the Ottoman center, and to extend the reach of their taxation with the speed necessary for the plundering nature of the Ottoman sultanate—leaving aside the elimination of Baghdad's nominal status as the seat of the Islamic caliphate.

We must assert that the growth of these metropolises was not built upon a national, sectarian, or political basis, but on an economic, social, military, and geographic basis. Administration played a trifling role in it. The relative independence of Mosul in the Hamdanid era was imposed by the Abbasid treasury's need for money in the ages in which the state declined to cover the deficit (through insurance or guaranty) in Mosul to the tune of 2 million dinars annually. This rate increased with the rise of the Hamdanids' rivals, who coveted local power. However, the right of final say in Mosul belonged to the Abbasid caliphs or the Buwayhids or the Seljuks or even, later on, the Mongols. These caliphs hired and fired the sultans of Mosul. This is a simplified historical summary of the rejection of the current idea of viewing the partition of Iraq as being consistent with its Islamic history.

The choice of a three-way leadership takes the sectarian-communal division into consideration. It represents the consolidation of a dangerous precedent with national and quasi-constitutional significance. It recalls the formula of the 1943 Lebanon charter that produced, among other things, a long civil war, besides the governmental and constitutional crisis that accompanied the formula. This kind of formula has never been a national solution or a national decision, but is the imposition of a foreign will, allowing numerous and wide-ranging possibilities for interference, widening its influence by partition, to pressure the political authority on sectarian or communal bases. This sort of partition cancels out the political majority and skews the political process with sectarian interests.

It is absolutely true that Iraq, throughout all of what we call national or patriotic rule, has known sectarian discrimination, favoring one sect over another, just as it has known national discrimination, favoring one community over another. This discrimination, however, was instituted by the occupying authority, allowing it to dominate the political process, which it saw as essential to keep consistent with *its* interests—not with the interests of Iraq. It nourished this discrimination by flaunting the partition, if not mitigating its harshness. It became clear that national unity is achieved in political, national, and sectarian terms, on the basis of the common national interest of all, by establishing the rights of the whole population—not on the basis of sectarian or communal distinctions that had fed the inclination to sectarian and communal discrimination and invalidated the rights of the greater part of Iraq's residents and citizens.

The conference was also marked by the clear absence of representatives of the democratic wing, independent

democratic persons, and political and democratic groupings. The manner of its convocation, the arbitrary proportions of representation, the conference's course of action, its resolutions, and its prearranged results, all caused widespread disappointment among Iraqi factions, sectors, and splinter groups in exile, and drew reactions, some of which appeared in statements and communiques from several quarters working against the regime. The reaction of the Iraqi people inside Iraq is impossible to gauge due to the lack of any way of learning what it is, but it surely came as a shocking surprise, just as the regime's abrupt decisions to declare war on Iran and to invade Kuwait came as surprises. It is a matter related to the life, destiny, and rights of the citizens of Iraq, who have no opportunity to make their views known. They were forced, by the weight of the regime's terrorism and the weakness of the capabilities for organized resistance, to go along with those surprises to their tragic end. Will the citizens of Iraq be forced to go along with the opposition's federal partition surprise, to its tragic end, as well?

The opposition's duties and missions may be to topple the regime and establish a democratic alternative, but the results of the Unified Iraqi National Conference annul this mission before the job of working to eliminate the negative effects of these results, by preoccupying the opposition forces with them, at least canceling or weakening their effect. Instead of unifying the Unified Iraqi National Conference, the opposition has split it in two, whether we like it or not. This time, the race will take place with the possession of places by this side or that. Some forces opposed to the conference feel that the job of opposing the declaration of federalism is just as important as opposing the regime and that it is premature to grant nationhood to or take it away from this or that side. The crisis of the Iraqi opposition deepened with the addition of this new chapter, in which priorities will be decided by political cunning and an ability to maneuver and reap the gains and positions of influence, rather than by patriotic principles.

It has been written, on many occasions, of the other side in the opposition crisis that the assessment is not realistic for global action. Sometimes it is inflated to the point of its limit to comply and made into the decisive factor, and at other times it is neglected, as if Iraq were a country surrounded by a vacuum. Either case is a sign of weak assessment resulting from weak abilities. This time, the global factor plays a regional role by playing an Iraqi role. If weakening Iraq as a unified, central country is what is sought, then its partition has neighboring extensions that complicate the opposition crisis by making it a source of threat to neighboring countries rather than to the regime. Thus the Iraqi opposition becomes a playing card for applying pressure, and we are back at the beginning: the problem of the appropriate and properly directed national decision.

The experiences of the Kurdish movement must be sufficient for its assessments to become proper; the other national sides must be, too. Therefore the independent

national decision, which above all sees its national interest, becomes the source of a realistic view that takes Iraq's interests into consideration with the interests of neighbors. All countries have their interests and national principles, and Iraq is one of them.

Husayn's International Position Assessed

*93BR7016A Groot-Bijgaarden DE STANDAARD
in Dutch 12 Jan 93 p 4*

[Article by Paul Vanden Baviere: "Saddam Husayn Has Nothing To Lose—Iraqis Blame Suffering on United States"]

[Text] The row surrounding the Iraqi ground-to-air missiles has just abated, and now the collection of Iraqi military equipment on territory awarded to Kuwait by the United Nations is whipping up more tumult. President Saddam Husayn is not contemplating surrender. On the contrary, he has nothing to lose and everything to gain, both internationally and at home, by standing firm.

The Americans—the activists behind the international coalition against Iraq in the Kuwait conflict—have made no secret of the fact that they will keep exerting maximum pressure on Iraq until Saddam Husayn bows out. In other words, even if Iraq meticulously complied with all the UN resolutions, the United States would still oppose lifting the painful economic sanctions imposed on Baghdad. Great Britain has publicly supported this attitude, which goes further than the UN resolutions.

The same applies to the establishment of no-fly zones in northern and southern Iraq by the United States, Great Britain, France, and Russia. In practice, such high-handed activities amount to taking a step toward dividing Iraq into three parts: the Kurdish north, the Sunni center, and the Shiite south. The north is already de facto independent. Potential further steps in the south could lead to a similar situation there.

This practical policy constitutes a violation of the UN resolutions which, despite their anti-Iraqi conditions, explicitly "demand that Iraq's sovereignty, territorial integrity, and political independence be respected."

So Baghdad was in the right—under international law—when it opposed the no-fly ban. That is how the Iraqis see it, too. Consequently, they are blaming the Americans—and not Saddam Husayn—for the suffering and hardship already experienced over the last two years as a result of the economic embargo. Each month, thousands of Iraqis continue to die due to the shortage of drugs and medical material and as a result of malnutrition.

Washington's hope of a coup and massive armed uprising against Saddam Husayn has seemed illusory. The opposition remains hopelessly divided and is vulnerable to manipulation by Turkey, Syria, Saudi Arabia, and Iran. The Americans did not take account of the strong nationalistic and revolutionary feeling in Iraq,

which already existed long before the rise of Saddam Husayn or his Baath party, which incorporated these principles into its program.

Furthermore, the central part of the country around Baghdad, which has been the political and cultural capital for centuries (before their independence, even Kuwaitis went there in droves to study), greatly fears what would happen if the Kurds and Shiites should ever march on to Baghdad.

However weak their position, the Iraqis would opt for stability rather than chaos. And stability can come from Saddam Husayn only. Moreover, their only comfort amid all the suffering is that their president can raise a defiant fist to the enemies, especially when the latter act illegally. So the home front closes ranks behind him.

On the international scene, Saddam Husayn chalked up some points last year and drained more support from the western policy of confrontation. Syria, an ally in the Gulf War against Iraq, strongly condemned the western policy of destruction and opposed the flight ban. On the Kurdish question, like Turkey and Iran, it denounced the establishment of an independent Kurdish state in northern Iraq.

Despite its old feuds with Iraq, Syria last year reopened some border posts, where a great deal of trading occurs. The anti-Iraqi propaganda was abandoned and postal links were reestablished. Another reason for this cautious reconciliation is that, after more than a year, the Middle East peace conference seems to have gotten nowhere and Israel's desire for peace is openly being doubted.

Another factor to Iraq's advantage is Iran's large-scale rearmament and its new expansionism, which the Arabian Gulf states are seeing in the dispute over three islands in the Gulf. As a result, Iraq is regaining importance. Last year Qatar restored diplomatic relations with Iraq and it now has an ambassador in Baghdad—even though the border dispute with Saudi Arabia probably also has something to do with this.

More generally, the rising tide of Islamic fundamentalism is to Iraq's benefit, as is the Western policy considered by the Muslims to be one of double standards. They reproach the West for allowing the extermination of the Muslims in Bosnia, paying mere lip service to the issue of the 415 Palestinians deported by Israel, while remaining prepared to resort to force against Iraq. Even Egypt, which could barely survive without U.S. aid, now says that it would no longer be prepared to go to war against Iraq. The only uncompromising countries in the Arab world are Kuwait and Saudi Arabia.

Opposition Discusses Return of Monarchy

*93AE0216A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
5 Dec 92 pp 1, 4*

[Article by Husni Khashabah: "Iraqi Opposition Discusses Restoration of Monarchy"]

[Text] Wilton Park (England)—Iraqi opposition circles have expressed their interest in the idea of restoring constitutional monarchy to Iraq—an idea projected during an international conference held in England and reported by AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT last Wednesday.

Some of these Iraqi circles have expressed the view that embracing the monarchy could be the best formula to achieve stability for the country and to spare it the risks of the total anarchy that is expected to develop as a result of the collapse of order throughout the country. Other circles believe that monarchy is one of a number of projected alternatives. All this comes in light of the conviction among the circles concerned that the elimination of the current ruling regime has become inevitable.

Dr. Khalid al-Tamimi, an independent opposition figure from the Iraqi National Reform Movement, has said that a constitutional monarchy could become one of the mainstays of Iraq's national unity, and he believes that a constitutional monarchy could act as an umbrella that shades all Iraqis from the various ethnic groups, religions, and sects. Moreover, a constitutional monarchy is, in al-Tamimi's opinion, sure to guarantee economic, political, and social stability.

Dr. al-Tamimi notes, in particular, the lack of stability, which has resulted in the capitalists' loss of confidence in work and production. He said that a "monarchy is capable of sparing the country the surprise promulgation of laws in the manner that has confused the agricultural sector and paralyzed the industrial sector."

As for Iraq's political structure, Dr. al-Tamimi believes that a constitutional monarchy is likely to enable the country to adopt a firm and stable system that offers equal opportunities to all, thus bringing about psychological stability in social behavior. Perhaps the most important aspect to be taken into account when assessing the issue of stability is a clear system of succession and the elimination of adventures and surprises.

Dr. al-Tamimi has asserted that a monarchy will not only be an element of stability for Iraq, but will also bolster the region's stability, especially at the level of relations with neighboring countries.

Other Iraqi opposition circles have expressed their interest in submitting the monarchy option to discussion by assemblies concerned with the situation in Iraq and with Gulf conditions, in general. In this regard, numerous Iraqi and non-Iraqi circles are unanimous that changing the ruling regime in Baghdad has not only become important, but also inevitable. For Iraq to avoid further chaos emanating from the collapse of the disciplinary structures, it is necessary to consider the alternative. In this connection, an Iraqi opposition figure who has asked not to be identified said that the inevitable change of regime in Baghdad means that Iraq can choose one of three alternatives:

The first is to adopt another authoritative dictatorial regime. This option has been rejected. The second is to test the people's wish for democratic elections. Then there is the third option, which calls for embracing a constitutional monarchy that is not tied to any ethnic or sectarian group. Thus, Iraq would become very similar to a federated state.

All of these options were presented at the international conference that was held at Wilton Park in Sussex, a British county. This conference ended its activities after weeklong deliberations that dealt with the horizons of settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict, the dangers of an inter-Arab conflict, and the elements of tension resulting from the geostrategic transformations in the region in wake of the collapse of the buffer zone, consisting of the Eurasian lands, between the Middle East and the Slavic Russian north. The conference was held under the slogan of the "new reality in the Middle East and the methods to deal with the conflict at the European and U.S. levels."

In his address to the conference, an Iraqi opposition figure noted that the only cure for Iraq is to use military force to topple Saddam Husayn. Iraq can then be a model for change, but it can, if miscalculations are made, turn into a source of political void, chaos, and radicalism.

Other speakers reviewed the conditions of the country's ethnic and sectarian makeup.

One speaker warned against politicizing the ethnic and sectarian disagreements because this would pose an extremely serious threat to Iraq and to the rest of the region.

The fact is that these deliberations on the Iraqi situation gain their significance in light of a phrase quoted by one of the speakers from Yevgeniy Primakov, the Soviet envoy during the Gulf crisis, who warned the West during the crisis of the threat of the void that could develop if no effective alternative regime is created. Primakov said: "Get rid of Saddam, and nobody knows what will happen afterward. Get rid of the Ba'th Party, and you will end up with anarchy." On this basis, the conference heard on its first day (last Monday) a British opinion that believes that restoring monarchy to both Iraq and Libya is sure to guarantee stability.

JORDAN

Minister: Budget Provides 6,000 New Jobs

93AE0194B London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 7 Dec 92
p 10

[Report from Amman: "Jardanah: New Jordanian Budget Ensures 6,000 New Job Opportunities"]

[Text] Minister of Finance Basil Jardanah said Jordan's new 1993 budget will create some 6,000 job opportunities and that state institutions will provide about 20,000

more jobs through capital expenditures, helping to curtail unemployment in Jordan. He added in a television interview that the rate of unemployment has dropped by 5 percent in 1991.

Minister Jardanah discussed the sales tax go into effect next year saying that it differs from the current consumer tax only in name and that foodstuffs and children's supplies are exempt from the new tax. He added that the government will impose the tax, monitor compliance, and ensure acceptance. He denied that the purpose of the tax is to increase government income and pointed to a 1990 World Bank report that stated that the tax effort in Jordan, at 21 to 22 points, is quite appropriate for the size of its gross domestic product, at 23 points. He added that the ratio is acceptable in comparison with other Arab countries such as Syria, Egypt, and Tunisia.

The minister of finance denied any government plans to reduce fees on automotive and machinery sales but did not deem it unlikely that fees may be reduced on electronics and instruments in general. On prices and whether they will rise or decline in the course of the coming year, the minister said that setting prices is the responsibility of the Ministry of Supply and that price increases, if any, are likely to be reasonable.

Jardanah called upon private stock companies to turn into general stock companies and pointed out that supporting such a change is a government priority. He added that the Jordanian Government has always sought to help underperforming companies and that the number of such companies in Jordan is very limited compared with the size of investment.

On Jordanian indebtedness, he said that Jordan has good and adequate reserves of gold and foreign currency, as well as of licensed bank assets, which were recently calculated at 6.3 billion dinars.

Explained the minister of finance: "If we consider all of these facts, we realize that Jordan's \$7.3 billion indebtedness has declined by 15 percent."

Bank Assets Grow to 6.3 Billion Dinars

93AE0194A London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 7 Dec 92
p 10

[Text] Licensed banks in Jordan had assets of 6.304 billion dinars by the end of last September. The uniform balance sheet for banks in Jordan indicates that banks assets climbed by about 249 million dinars, from 5.155 billion a year earlier.

That amount, according to the uniform balance sheet, consists of about 26.5 million dinars in cash, about 250,000 in deposits with the Central Bank, 117.5 million in deposits with local banks, about 19 million in foreign exchange, some 1.5 billion in foreign currency deposits with banks abroad, 23.5 million dinars denominated in

foreign currencies and invested abroad, and about 846.5 million dinars in foreign currency deposits with the Central Bank.

Those assets, which represent the position of licensed banks in Jordan in the third quarter of 1992, included about 156.5 million dinars in government bonds, public sector bonds, and mortgage bonds; about 228.5 million dinars in treasury notes; and more than 2 billion dinars in credit facilities such as loans, credit, drafts, and current debit accounts.

The assets also included about 508 million dinars in checks and unrealized withdrawals, domestic investments, real estate, furniture, etc.

The liabilities of licensed banks amounted to 6.113 billion dinars by the end of last September. Of that amount, 2 billion dinars were in time deposits by the resident private sector, municipalities, and the public sector; 766.5 million dinars in demand deposits; and about 1.5 billion dinars in deposits of foreign currency equivalents. Of the latter, more than 1 billion dinars were in deposits by nonresidents and the remainder in foreign bank loans and deposits by banks abroad.

Liabilities also included 302 million dinars in deposits by the government, the central bank, and by local banks and other financial institutions; about 25 million dinars in checks and withdrawals; and 165 million dinars in reserves and allocations.

Jordan's reserves of gold and foreign exchange amounted by the end of last September to more than 3.5 billion dinars for an increase of about 660 million dinars over a year earlier.

The Central Bank's gold and foreign currency reserves rose in the same period from about 1 billion last year to about 1.082 billion dinars. This included some 70 million dinars in gold. The remainder was in foreign exchange, foreign debt balances, and special drawing rights.

Farhan Lists IAF Projects, Political Programs

93AE0178C Amman AL-RIBAT in Arabic 18 Nov 92
p 6

[Article by Ishaq Ahmad al-Farhan, secretary general of the Islamic Action Front: "Projects Planned by the Islamic Action Front Party"]

[Text] The Islamic Action Front [IAF] has specific targets rooted in strategic objectives that are responsive to current needs. The realization of those objectives would make it possible to accomplish the objectives of the stages to follow. In the service of those short- and long-range objectives, the IAF espouses plans and programs as a framework within which it works for those goals. We draw attention to the following important points as we review those plans and programs:

First: Quality and quantity. The number of those plans and projects is not infinite but increases and decreases in response to intellectual innovation and the pragmatic need for such projects to accomplish objectives. Thinking heads in the IAF are called upon to propose even more such plans and programs.

Second: Extent and range. Such projects and plans are complete and comprehensive. They represent, in their totality, targeted Islamic solutions to all issues and problems in light of Islamic concepts rooted in the fiqh [jurisprudence] of Koranic verses, the hadith [prophetic teachings], and munzal ["things descended from God"] and tempered by the realities of the present and the dictates of the times. This is called "present-day fiqh."

Those projects focus on the domestic issues of the Jordanian people from an Islamic perspective. Actions in the service of the Palestinian cause are considered patriotic, as are actions towards Arab unity and actions that serve Islamic and humanitarian causes on both Islamic and worldwide levels.

Third: Rankings and priorities. These projects vary in importance, command different priorities, and must therefore be ranked accordingly. There should be flexibility in assigning priorities as conditions warrant and in light of changes and developments.

Fourth: Efficacy and extent of success (evaluation). These plans and projects require different implementation schedules. They also resolve problems and face challenges with varying levels of success, depending on the degree that the capacities of all segments of the people and the nation have been mobilized in the collective and cooperative effort to achieve those objectives.

Fifth: Ways and means. A project may be quickly defined in a preliminary manner before its various components are subjected to scrutiny and detailed study.

A project is composed of two parts. The first deals intellectually and dialectically with its basis in shari'a. The second deals with pragmatic and procedural considerations rooted in reality.

Projects are prepared cooperatively by teams that include shari'a and scientific specialists as well as others with empirical knowledge and practical experience.

Below is a listing of the more important projects that deal with domestic Jordanian issues, with the Palestinian cause, with regional Arab issues, with issues of the Islamic nation, and finally with worldwide humanitarian issues.

First. Domestic Jordanian issues may be classified into four categories.

1. Legislation and law-making in an Islamic direction. This includes:

- A plan to purify laws and statutes of any conflict with Islamic shari'a.

- A plan to put laws and statutes on the course of Islamic legislation.
- A plan to enact Islamic laws and statutes, derived from Islamic shari'a, in accordance with the need and the ability to do so.

2. The political aspect:

- A plan for national unity entails:
 - Combatting nationalism, sectarianism, and prejudice.
 - Muslim-Christian cooperation in exposing Zionist designs. Arab Christians are to expose Zionist attempts to infiltrate and Zionize the Christian religion in the West.
- A plan for basic freedoms and human rights includes safeguarding basic citizen freedoms and human rights in the motherland, and particularly the human rights of Arabs and Muslims.
- A plan to bolster consultative and democratic action and create a role model for the Arab region.
- A plan for administrative reform and development.

3. Economic issues:

- A plan for social and economic development from an Islamic perspective.
- A plan to energize the agricultural sector and to achieve the goals of self-sufficiency and food security.
- A plan for industrialization and technological development.
- A plan to develop intra-Arab trade and work towards an Arab common market.

4. Social and cultural issues:

- A plan to eradicate illiteracy.
- A plan to tie education to societal needs.
- A plan to elevate the teaching profession.
- A plan to Islamize information and fight the cultural Westernization of the nation.
- A plan to Arabize university education.
- Guaranteed housing for all citizens.
- A health security plan that covers all citizens.
- A plan to focus on the working class, fight unemployment on all levels, and ensure employment for all citizens.
- A plan to make the woman's role in social development and national renaissance more effective.
- A plan to make the role youths play in social development and national renaissance more effective.

Second. Palestinian issues:

- A plan to provide the intifadah with moral and financial support.
- A plan to fight the normalization of relations with the Zionist enemy.

- A plan to fight Zionist designs that have led to the creation of the State of Israel. Help prepare the nation to liberate Palestine.
- A plan for Jordanian-Palestinian unity.

Third. Arab and Islamic issues:

- A plan for a Levantine union, otherwise known as Greater Syria.
- A plan for Iraqi-Levantine union, otherwise known as the Fertile Crescent.
- A plan to help achieve Arab unity.
- A plan for an Arab common market.
- A plan to focus on issues of the Islamic nation.
- A plan to help propel Arab and Islamic renaissance.

Fourth. Worldwide issues:

- A plan to challenge Western domination and the Westernization directed against the Arab and Islamic nation.
- A plan to challenge the new world order and resist new Western colonization of parts of the Arab world.
- A projected plan to create a front of the world's meek that would oppose domineering world powers.
- A plan to help create a world Islamic order as an alternative to the imperialistic Western world order.

Report Profiles Social Security System

93AE0178B Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 15 Nov 92
p 12

[Article by Yahya al-Juju: "Resources of Social Security Organization: Investments Grow to 470 Million Dinars"]

[Text] The Social Security Organization has become one of the kingdom's major investment institutions thanks to its surplus of funds. The organization's investments rose from 12 million dinars at the end of 1989 to about 470 million dinars by the end of this past September.

Informed sources said that the organization's monthly expenditures exceed 2 million dinars, of which half is in the form of monthly retirement benefits. The organization logged some 105.8 million dinars in underwriting costs alone by the middle of last September. Of that amount, 41.4 million dinars were in retirement benefits, some 56.3 million dinars in compensation benefits, and 8 million dinars for the treatment of workplace injuries.

The sources said that the Social Security Organization provided worker compensation benefits to 72,000 workers who were injured on the job. Beneficiaries receive treatment and compensation in lieu of wages while they undergo treatment and are unable to work. The vast majority of such workers return to work after recuperating. Monthly retirement benefits are issued to those few who can not return to work due to total disability and to the families of those who consequently die.

The sources went on to say that some 1,000 new social security beneficiaries are added to the rolls every month

and that they include new retirees, lump-sum compensation beneficiaries, and the injured, who are provided with the necessary medical care.

The sources explained that in close to 13 years of service, the Social Security Organization has taken long strides towards its objective of safeguarding and nurturing the Jordanian work force, and even all citizens. Workers of institutions with five or more employees, as well as government employees and workers who are not entitled to government retirement benefits, are now covered by the social security umbrella.

Social Security Organization sources said that it now covers 650,000 workers of more than 7,000 employers. Of those covered, 300,000 are still employed, while some 51,000 individuals and families receive monthly retirement benefits. The organization has also issued lump-sum compensation to about 145,000 insured. [numbers as published]

The sources ask all insured by Social Security who are approaching their 60th birthday but who have not accumulated a minimum of five years in the system to contact the Organization in order to indicate whether they wish to continue in the system after age 60. Workers would lose coverage if they reach 60 without accumulating the mandatory five years, either by subscribing on a month to month basis or by purchasing service years.

Those who reach the age of 60 and have five years in the system may continue to work and pay into Social Security until they complete the years of employment necessary for retirement. They must notify their employers and the Social Security Organization of their desire to do so, however.

Citizens Discuss Political Participation, Parties

93AE0178A Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 22 Nov 92
p 13

[Article by Fathi al-'Arqan: "AL-DUSTUR Investigates Why Parties Are Not Popular With Citizens"]

[Text] It is rumored that the number of announced parties in Jordan (and not just those officially registered so far) accounts for about 10 percent of all the 800 or so parties throughout the world. And yet, only a handful of parties have registered so far. There are only nine such parties, to be specific, which in itself says a lot considering the size of the population and compared with the number of parties in Britain and the United States, for instance. The failure of other parties to even register is an indication of the many problems they encounter.

It is a given that a major problem of those parties is their lack of popularity among the citizenry. AL-DUSTUR therefore decided to explore the thinking of citizens and find out why they hesitate to engage in partisan activity. We held dozens of interviews—about 70. Most answers we received were similar. Those that were different are relayed below.

Salma al-Qaddumi, a supervising nurse, said: "I do not now, nor do I intend to, belong to a party because our parties are neither here nor there and they bring us nothing but problems. I do not believe that they are effective. They are like a stamp that brands people by the party to which they belong as if it were an indictment!"

Ahmad al-Qaddumi, an employee, said: "I have never belonged, nor do I intend to belong to a party. It will be sufficient to give you one example. Should the head of the party turn out bad or should he make a mistake, the party will suddenly become suspect, and suspicion will consequently fall on all its members and may even become an indictment one day. Why, therefore, should one look for a headache?"

Dr. Bahiyyah al-'Azzah said: "No, I have never belonged and will not ever belong to a party because I have no faith in any party in the Arab world. I do not believe that any such party has justified its existence. Observers of the announced parties will note that the faces have remained the same and that the mentalities have not changed. All of those parties, or most of them, do not target the problems of our society.... What do I care about problems in Korea, when I have my own problems at home about which nobody seems to care? Those parties have not proven to be of value to the people. I believe that they exist only to benefit their leaders and to serve them at the expense of the public interest."

Teacher 'Abdallah Ibrahim 'Uthman said: "I am not a member of any party because I believe that none of the parties in the region is fully dedicated to the service of Arab society. I believe, without offering examples, that most parties have more ties abroad than they have with the societies that they supposedly serve."

Technical designer Ibrahim 'Ayish said: "No, I am not convinced of any party and therefore have not joined any and will never do so." When we asked why, he replied: "I do not want to say. I have my private reasons. Furthermore, I do not have the free time."

Dr. Lumays Muhammad Muhsin said: "I have not joined any party. I do not believe that any of the various parties and organizations have had anything to offer us since the 50s. I believe that everyone can serve one's country and one's society from one's workplace without having to be a member of a party. Serving one's country is not limited to parties."

Construction worker Amjad (last name withheld by request):

[Arqan] Have you ever belonged to a party?

[Amjad] Why, do you see a relationship between [social development] and partisanship?

[Arqan] Are [social development] and partisanship mutually exclusive?

[Amjad] You are pretending that you do not know? Brother, bread and butter is our main concern. We will worry about the parties when we are no longer hungry.

[Arqan] May I take your picture?

[Amjad] Take all the pictures you want, but do not show my face. You see how it is.

[Arqan] Why are you so shy? Labor is honorable!

[Amjad] That is party talk, but the truth is different. Please, I do not want to say anymore.

Engineer Muhammad Ahmad Abu-Na'im said: "I do not belong to any party. Please do not ask me any questions, but I would like to ask you: Has any of our parties offered a platform? Which of our parties has a long-, medium-, or even a short-range plan? Besides, how much weight can any one party wield in the political balance of this country?"

He added: "I believe that no party, no matter how broad its base, can gain more seats in parliament than the Islamic bloc, and yet it was unable to pass even a single stated objective. This bloc also remained passive when it and its members were subjected to attacks and suspensions. It is obvious, therefore, that the executive branch will do what it wants, regardless of whether or not we have parties. Sometimes, especially lately, the executive branch has been ahead of the parties in initiating reforms. What good are the parties then?"

Muhammad Sa'id Ahmad Salih Ghannam, an employee, said: "Yes, I enrolled in one party, and then resigned when I realized that parties are full of dirty tricks. Each seeks power for itself. The fact is, they are merely legal facades for exploitative operations that serve only certain leaders. I believe that I no longer have any desire to join any party at all."

Media person Taysir Bushah said: "I have not joined a party because I do not like any of them. To put it briefly, I would be committed to the policies of any party I join. As things stand now, I am free to do what I please. Being free is the essence of democracy!"

University student Maysun al-Za'atirah said: "I do not know if parties accept student members, or even female members. I really do not know that, and I do not know in what way parties would serve me. The truth is, I have nothing against parties, but I do not feel that I am missing anything by not belonging to a party. Frankly, if parties are good, then I believe that they are doing a very poor job of reaching the citizens whom they are supposed to serve."

Salim Muhammad 'Abd-al-Kadir Salih, an unemployed university graduate, said: "I do not belong to any party. Do you think that if I did they would find me a job?"

When we told him that parties are not employment agencies even though they can sometimes place people

by using their influence or contacts, he responded: "If they could find me a job, I would enroll in 10 of them at the same time!"

Ahmad 'Abd-al-Rahim, a computer operator, said: "I have not joined a party because, to put it simply, I do not know what parties are and what responsibilities they should have."

We asked: "Are you totally oblivious and truly have no concept of partisan activity?"

He replied: "I believe that perhaps they are organizations similar to al-Nafir al-Islami [Islamic Mobilization Youth Organization], for instance, but without bearing arms. I truly do not know. And because there is responsibility, I do not know what is allowed and what is not. I do not want to know or to join any party. In short, I know nothing about parties."

Athlete Husayn Ahmad Mukahalal said: "I have not joined any party, and I have no plans to do so. I have no experience with parties, and I believe that the parties are doing a poor job of marketing themselves to the public. We need what might be described as partisan education, and I believe that the parties should be more open to the public so that we can study them, differentiate among them, select the best of them, or stay away from them if they do not meet our expectations. I believe that parties are currently isolated in their ivory towers and market themselves only to the select few. All you have to do is wander among the people at election time. This is what they believe, but they are wrong because they will never succeed until they are able to reach the people and interact with them."

Muhammad Rajih, a teacher, said: "No, I am not a party member, and I have no faith in parties." When asked why, he said: "I wish to say no more. I just do not believe in them."

Ayman Muhammad Ahmad Dihdah said: "I have not joined any party because I am my parents' only child."

We said: "We are asking you about parties and not about service in the armed forces."

He replied: "What party takes on an only child? I really do not know." (We ascertained that he was actually candid!)

Mrs. Hikmat Jabir said: "No, I have not enrolled in any party, and I am not sure that I am entitled to do that. The truth is, I have neither asked about this nor read anything about it. I therefore need to contact my husband and then call you."

The lady was indeed as good as her word and called to say that she hardly has enough time to take care of her home and can do without additional obligations.

Muhammad Ahmad al-Zahir, managing director of Al-Nahda Information and Publishing House, said: "I have not yet joined a party, because I am not convinced. I

believe that our broad experience in the Arab nation proves that there is no cause to believe in or have faith in parties in the Arab world because those parties have not, and will not, do anything of benefit to the people in as far as the quality of life or domestic conditions are concerned."

Tariq Salim al-Khalaf, who is self-employed, said: "I have not joined a party because I am a deferred draftee in the service of science." When we asked what that had to do with party membership, he said: "The science draft is frozen, but not canceled. This means that I could be called to service at any time. It is common knowledge that political and partisan activity are forbidden for the military establishment. Do you want me to join a party then be drafted into the Army, which would find out about my party affiliation and put me on trial?"

Mrs. Na'yim Faris Umm-Mu'az, a school principal in 'Awjan, said: "I did not join a party because I am a government employee, and I am not sure that people in government service are allowed to join parties. Furthermore, I barely have the time for my job and my home, and I truthfully do not know what the parties want or what their purpose or objectives are."

Novotel employee 'Adil Mal-Allah Nasri said: "I failed to graduate from high school and therefore have not and will not join any party." When asked what the relationship was between parties and the failure to graduate, he said: "I only have a junior high school diploma, and according to my own information, I am not entitled to join a party."

Mrs. Maysar al-Haj, a school principal in Mukhayyam al-Baq'ah, said: "No, God forbid. Of course I am not a member of any party." When asked the reason why, she responded: "For several reasons. First, I not convinced of the parties and their usefulness. Second, I have no interest in political action. Third, one's experience with parties and their problems makes one think a hundred times before joining any of them."

Haji Muhammad Khalil Abu-'Abdallah, a greengrocer, said: "I am a merchant, and I have no affiliation with politics. I do not wish to lend my name to anything that has to do with politics. Please, son, for God's sake, let me go about the business of earning a living."

A customer of the greengrocer's, who identified himself only as 'Afif, said: "The aim of parties is to get certain people to be prosecutors or cabinet ministers. The fact is, no party in our country can achieve as large [a majority] as the Islamic Front. Still, even the front could not achieve a parliamentary majority and was consequently unable to form a government. Besides, parties in our country are known for their boasting."

Mrs. Muha Muhammad Sa'id Qutayfat, a teacher, said: "I am not a party member because I do not believe in parties. They change their colors and objectives like chameleons. One day they stand for something that you believe in, so you join, only to have the leadership

suddenly turn it back on those tenets. If you object, you are told to resign because the objective of parties is to serve a select group of people. Parties, to my knowledge, do not have a system whereby members can progress through the ranks or whereby the rank and file are given an opportunity for eventual leadership. Another reason is that I want to avoid headaches."

Salim Jabr, an employee, said: "In fact I joined a party about a year ago, and then I suddenly learned that it fractured and splintered, then coalesced, and then splintered again, and I did not know where I stood. I therefore decided two months ago to keep away from parties."

'Abd-al-Rahman Khalifah Abu-al-'Abd, a technical worker, said: "I went to one party and applied for membership. I asked about payment and whether it was monthly, but I was told not to worry about it. I checked with them again two months later only to find out that instead of giving us money they wanted us to pay dues."

We asked him: "Why did you expect them to pay you?" He answered: "I do not know, but I read that parties are starving for members and that they pay for them."

Jamal Hamdan al-Hajuj, a teacher in Suwaylih, said: "I am not partisan, and I do not believe that a citizen can serve his country only through political action. There are many ways in which one can serve one's country, and I do not like to be a pawn used by somebody to gain prominence and serve his interests at my expense. I also challenge any party to offer in the next few days a meaningful and feasible reform program to which it would be committed once it assumes power. It is obvious, however, that the real objectives of the parties are to secure positions of leadership, seats in parliament, and cabinet portfolios."

We conclude by noting that the statements above were culled from dozens of similar ones. We hope that they enlighten the parties about how they are perceived by the man in the street and propel them to correct the flaws that are rooted in citizens' ignorance of the ABC's of partisan and political action and that necessarily mean that the parties themselves are not doing their jobs.

AL-RA'Y Workers' Strike Follows New Press Law

93P40093A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
11 Jan 93 p 2

[Text] Amman—Journalists and employees at the Jordanian daily newspaper AL-RA'Y have decided to announce an open strike until the newspaper's management carries out its employees' demands. This follows the Jordanian Chamber of Deputies' passage of the press and publications law, which does not allow an editor-in-chief to hold two jobs at the same time. The journalists and employees in the establishment formed a committee to follow up on the matter with AL-RA'Y's

management, which comprises the editors-in-chief, heads of the major departments, and a number of editors.

It has been learned that Jordanian Labor Minister 'Abd-al-Karim Kabariti supported the journalists' demands, which centered on admitting them to membership in their newspaper's board of directors, forming an editorial board for the newspaper, increasing the journalists' salaries, and increasing concern for their internal affairs.

Paper Outlines New Press Law, Controversy

93AE0208A London AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI 14 Dec 93
p 4

[Article by Wafa' 'Amr]

[Text] Amman—Journalists, writers, some deputies, and certain international organizations have objected to the parliament's ratification of two articles of the press and publication law concerning the banning of publications. The first 43 articles of the law were ratified during the parliament's first session.

The journalists consider the first 40 articles of the press and publishing law in particular, which the parliament endorsed last week and which provide several banning articles as unfair and unjust for the press and journalists. This is the least that can be said about them. A wide debate about Article 42 of the press and publication law took place. The article provides for the following:

A. The publication of the following is banned:

- News reports prejudicial to the king and the royal family.
- Any information regarding the number of the Jordanian armed forces, their armament, equipment, location, or movements unless publishing is permitted by an official source of the Jordanian armed forces; or any news report, drawing, or comment prejudicial to the armed forces and the security organs.
- Articles or materials containing contempt for any of the religions and creeds whose freedom is guaranteed by the constitution.
- Articles that may harm national unity, instigate the perpetration of crimes, sow hatred, or incite rancor and division among members of the community.
- Minutes of the House of Representatives' secret meetings.
- Articles or news reports that aim to undermine confidence in the national currency.
- Articles or information containing personal insult to Arab, Islamic, and friendly heads of state or to heads of diplomatic missions and their accredited staff in the kingdom.
- Articles or news reports that might be harmful to the dignity of individuals and their freedom or damaging to their reputation.
- News items, reports, dispatches, articles and photographs that violate morals and public decency.

- Advertisements promoting medicines and medical preparations, unless their publication is permitted in advance by the ministry of health.

B. Foreign publications are banned from entry if they contain material banned from publishing in accordance with the provisions of this law.

Views were divided on this subject between those supporting the legal committee's decision to delete this article and between those against it, because the bans it contains are also contained in other laws, particularly the penal code. But when the matter was put to the legislature, it was decided to keep the article as it appeared in the draft law prepared by the government. Minister of Information Mahmud al-Sharif said this article does not constitute any press restrictions and the aim is to preserve the country's security. Deleting this article would create an imbalance in the law, he said.

Mahmud al-Kayid, editor of the mass circulation newspaper AL-RA'Y, wrote an article in the last page of his newspaper protesting the restrictions. Al-Kayid made some observations and raised questions, including:

"Supposing a newspaper published on its front-page a news report saying: 'Five officers have been promoted to the rank of colonel and six to the rank of lieutenant colonel.' Could this news report possibly be considered prejudicial to the armed forces or to the security apparatus on the grounds that this report could be beneficial to the enemy by knowing about promotions and transfers in the armed forces, and would this be considered prejudicial to the security structures?"

The Chamber of Deputies will debate the remaining articles of the press and publishing law, including Article 44, to which al-Kayid referred in his article. Article 44 states: The publishing of minutes of regular courts looking into any case before them is banned before a final ruling on those cases is made, unless the court permits them to be published.

Al-Kayid wondered: "From where did the government bring this 'ban', and how could it ban the press and the journalists from publishing court proceedings, particularly since those proceedings are held publicly and anybody is entitled to attend them."

In Article 47, a publication and those working at it are banned from receiving from any foreign source, whether outside the kingdom or inside it, any aid or financial grant or material benefit or fee, except with the cabinet's approval. Al-Kayid wondered: "Isn't this too much, honorable deputies? If a Jordanian journalist sends an article or a report to a foreign newspaper, is he not supposed to take any fee for his work, except after obtaining the cabinet's approval? And if he did, would he be considered as having committed a crime that is punishable by law and sentenced to imprisonment or to pay a fine of 4,000 dinars to 6,000 dinars, or by both sentences (article 54)?"

The London-based International Center Against Censorship, which defends freedom of opinion and calls for banning censorship, criticized the press and publication law that is being debated by the Chamber of Deputies. The center called on the Chamber of Deputies to delete certain articles because their ratification no doubt constitutes a danger to freedom of exchange of information. It said: "The penal code is far less severe, and the present law is more lenient. We cannot judge the previous stage because censorship of journalists and the press was in the hands of the minister of information. But now there is a kind of law that eases the penal code, which contains harsh imprisonment sentences for the journalists. Under the present law, the journalists will only pay a fine."

KUWAIT

Defense Seeks Increase of 3.5 Billion Dinars

93AE0200A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
11 Dec 92 p 4

[Article by Husayn 'Abd-al-Rahman]

[Text] Kuwait—Kuwaiti Defense Minister Shaykh 'Ali al-Sabah, speaking before a meeting of the finance committee at the Kuwaiti People's Assembly, took more than five hours to review his ministry's justifications for asking for a 3.5-billion-dinar increase in the defense budget.

While the minister declined to reveal what went on during the discussions, Dr. Isma'il al-Shatti, the committee chairman, said that Shaykh 'Ali explained how the required additional allocations will be spent. He said the defense minister explained to the members that part of these allocations are earmarked for spending on the defense agreements with both the United States and Britain, but he declined to reveal the figures in question.

Al-Shatti said the committee members support bolstering the security and defense plan and believe that it is one of the most important priorities for the Kuwaiti leadership. He said the minister discussed the present circumstances in the area, eventualities of the general situation, and the preparations that have been made in cooperation with the allies. He said the maneuvers that will take place in the coming days represent an indication of how those eventualities will be dealt with.

He said the committee did not discuss types of weapons, but stressed the committee's resolve to provide for the Ministry of Defense's needs. The committee will decide on the matter in another meeting after hearing other viewpoints in order to throw more light on aspects of the subject. However, he did not specify which people will be called upon to give their views.

The committee chairman said the minister attended yesterday's meeting in order to discuss the law concerning increasing the defense budget. The law was issued last August. He said the Defense Ministry's plan is

to raise the armed forces' standard because "the allied armies are partners with us, but do not fight for us."

On the other hand, Salih al-Fidalah, deputy speaker of the Kuwaiti People's Assembly, has won the chairmanship of the parliamentary fact-finding committee at a meeting held yesterday. Ahmad Baqir, the People's Assembly secretary, has been unanimously voted as the committee rapporteur. Baqir said the committee decided to meet twice weekly. It has also set up a three-man working team, consisting of Baqir, Dr. Ya'qub Hayati and lawyer Muhammad Sharar, that will lay down a plan under which citizens and officials will be invited to give their views on the "Black Thursday" [the day of the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait] disaster. The committee, Baqir added, will seek the help of consultants and will secure everything that will facilitate its task. He stated that the process of hearing citizens and officials will depend on the legislative committee's report, which will be completed in a year's time. He said: "The legislative committee's report gives us the right to seek the help of retired military personnel and of people inside and outside the government."

On the other hand, it has been learned that the committee on prisoners has submitted its report to the Assembly speaker on how to deal with the issue of Kuwaiti prisoners held by the Iraqi regime.

Deputy 'Abd-al-Muhsin Jamal said the committee has recommended dissolving the National Committee for Prisoners' Affairs, which was set up by the government. He said this recommendation was made because of the committee's shortcomings and its inability to complete the prisoners' files. The committee has not lived up to the peoples' expectations, he added.

Jamal stated that the majority of deputies have demanded dissolving the National Committee for Prisoners' Affairs and setting up a people's committee in order to avoid repetition of the negative actions of the previous committee, particularly with regard to the question of completing the files.

The disclosure of this information coincided with the arrival in Kuwait yesterday of nine persons, including three Kuwaitis, who had spent about two years in Iraq. They were believed to be missing. Officials of the national committee said information provided by the families of the three Kuwaitis was the only source of information about their disappearance. This has led to the belief that the Iraqi authorities arrested them during the occupation, but it has now transpired that they went to Iraq to visit their relatives and were stranded there after the liberation operation was launched. An official said that the nine persons were returned yesterday after contacts were made with the International Red Cross Committee in Iraq.

Demographic Data on Kuwaiti, Foreign Population

93AE0199A London AL-HAYAH in Arabic
11 Dec 92 p 13

[Article by Suzanna Tarbush: "Kuwaiti Citizens Number 565,960 Out of Total Population of 1.24 Million"]

[Text] London—According to a report drawn up by Burks and Sinclair, a British firm, the number of Kuwaitis living in Kuwait is 565,960 citizens, compared with 577,650 citizens in 1990, i.e., prior to the Iraqi invasion. Some Kuwaitis, especially those with children and families, continue to live outside Kuwait. The report says that Kuwait's total population is 1.24 million and that the drop in the number of foreigners has exceeded the drop in the number of Kuwaiti citizens. Consequently, Kuwaitis constitute now 45 percent of Kuwait's population.

The report contains the latest statistics, obtained by the British firm while it was studying the GCC [Gulf Cooperation Council] markets. The report was published last summer, but the materials for the study were compiled this April, when Kuwait's population was still undergoing a rapid change.

However, Kuwait's demographic numbers have stabilized now, and Burks and Sinclair included the latest figures available in its report.

The report says that GCC citizens constitute now a higher percentage of the GCC population than the percentage existing prior to the Iraqi invasion. Out of a total of 17.6 million GCC residents, the number of these countries' citizens amounts to 10.5 million, or 60.6 percent the population, whereas this percentage was 56.7 percent before the invasion.

As a consequence of the Gulf war, the tendency to use foreign non-Arab labor in the GCC states—a tendency that has been evident since 1975—has been reinforced. This consequence became obvious when Palestinians and Jordanians left Kuwait.

Kuwaitis constitute less than 20 percent of Kuwait's workforce. Even though Kuwait relies less on foreign labor now than it did prior to the invasion, the report says that the country will not be able to dispense with foreign labor for a long time to come.

Kuwaiti women contribute a relatively large percentage to the workforce, considering that they constitute 13.8 percent of this workforce. Non-Kuwaitis living in Kuwait now number 678,000 people, and the ratio of men to women among them is four to one. Prior to the Iraqi invasion, foreigners in Kuwait seemed to be more settled, considering that 30 percent of them were below the age of 15, due to the presence of a high percentage of families among them. But now, non-Kuwaiti juveniles amount to only 8 percent.

The reason for declining stability among non-Kuwaitis is due to the great drop in the percentage of Palestinians

and Jordanians, a large number of whom had their families in Kuwait. In 1990, there were more than 270,000 Jordanians and Palestinians, i.e., nearly 18 percent of the non-Kuwaiti population. This number has dropped now to less than 40,000, or 5.6 percent of the non-Kuwaitis, whose number has decreased in any case.

Even though other Arabs have replaced the Jordanians and Palestinians, non-Kuwaiti Arabs now amount to just 45 percent [of the non-Kuwaiti population], whereas they constituted 63.5 percent prior to eruption of the Gulf crisis. Asians have increased in numbers, amounting to 53 percent of the non-Kuwaiti population, and it seems that this increase will continue. Egyptians constitute the biggest Arab group now living in Kuwait, numbering 95,000 residents. Indians follow, numbering 94,000 residents. Pakistani residents number 72,300, and there are 68,500 Bangladesh residents.

The drop in the total number of residents has its implicit consequences for government spending on public services, such as health and education. This drop has had significant effects on housing, with the prices of homes dropping by up to 50 percent.

As a consequence of the increased employment of Asians in the GCC states, the purchasing power of noncitizens has weakened even more. Asian labor does not earn high wages, and it spends less than what it earns. Asians save money and send it to their kinsmen back home. Meanwhile, the GCC native population enjoys a high standard of living, and its average income has not decreased, despite the general problems experienced by the economies of these states. In view of all of this, marketing strategies must take into account the growing importance of the native populations of the GCC states. Underage citizens are gaining greater dominance in the market, considering that those below the age of 15 constitute 48.1 percent of population of these states.

It is likely that the breakup of what used to be the Soviet Union will affect the makeup of foreigners residing in the GCC states. The Islamic Soviet republics adjacent to the Middle East are considered a likely source of labor, and there are signs that there is demographic movement in this direction.

The report says that Iran's population is 45 million and that the population of the family of independent southern Islamic republics amounts to more than 110 million people. Even though individual income in these countries is much lower than the individual income in Saudi Arabia, for example, oil resources could perhaps change this situation. Moreover, these republics' populations are thirsty for development. The report predicts that the strategies of marketing companies will take this major market into consideration.

Assembly Seeks Wide-Ranging Changes in Military

93AE0221C London AL-HAYAH in Arabic
20 Dec 94 p 4

[Article by Hamad al-Jasir: "Kuwait: Parliament Demands Change of Army Commands as Condition for Approving Armament Program"]

[Text] The Kuwaiti Defense Ministry is encountering difficulties in obtaining the National Assembly's approval for its defense armament program, which is estimated to cost \$3 billion. Meanwhile, a prominent deputy has announced that the Assembly will not approve the program unless wide-ranging changes are made in the Army commands.

Last year, Shaykh Jabir al-Ahmad al-Sabah, the ruler of Kuwait, issued a decree that called for the appropriation of 3.5 billion dinars (\$11.7 billion) for defense, arms, and rebuilding the Kuwaiti Armed Forces over a 12-year period. In accordance with the Constitution, the decree needs the National Assembly's approval to become valid.

Defense Minister Shaykh 'Ali al-Sabah has met with the Assembly's Finance Committee members to clarify the Army's viewpoint. At an undeclared meeting held with the committee last week, the minister presented the detailed plan to rebuild and reequip the Army.

AL-HAYAH has learned from parliamentary sources that the plan "is a compromise between two other plans: A low-cost plan with conservative programs presented by Britain and an exorbitantly expensive plan presented by the United States that entails an extensive program with [long] lists of equipment and arms."

A few days ago, Edward Ghunaym, the U.S. ambassador to Kuwait, urged the Kuwaiti Government to increase its defense and security spending and to purchase more sophisticated combat equipment.

Certain Kuwaiti deputies fear that the Defense Ministry will try to obtain more funds for military spending at a time when Kuwait is encountering difficult economic conditions. Other deputies have asserted that the current budget will not see the light unless "fundamental change is introduced into the armed forces."

Deputy Mubarak al-Duwaylah, a Finance Committee member, said in a press interview published yesterday that he was "surprised by the decline of confidence between the main base of Army officers and some Army commands." He noted that he explored the opinions of some officers, "who expressed their determination and their demand that the budget not be passed unless major reforms are introduced into the Army."

The deputy pointed out that there is "conviction that those who contributed to the armed forces' deterioration throughout years prior to the Iraqi occupation crisis and who abandoned their responsibilities during the crisis

cannot be trusted anew with the safety of the country and of its citizens." Al-Duwaylah stressed the importance of "tying the armament budget with fundamental reforms in the military establishment, particularly in its commands, and allowing the principle of reward and punishment to prevail" on the basis of the particulars of Iraq's invasion of Kuwait.

National Assembly sources have said that certain military people and officers have reservations on the plan drafted by the Defense Ministry. It has been understood that the plan has provisions to purchase Patriot missiles.

Next Wednesday, the Finance Committee will hold an important meeting that will be attended by the defense minister and a number of army commanders. Dr. Isma'il al-Shatti, the committee chairman, has told AL-HAYAH that the meeting "seeks to hear the viewpoints of Minister 'Ali al-Sabah and of the Army staff officers on the arms plan and military spending priorities and to examine Kuwait's military arrangements with its allies in order to find possible dangers." Al-Shatti added: "We need guarantees of sound and honest military spending."

In another area, the State Security Court acquitted yesterday a Kuwaiti woman charged with collaborating with the Iraqi Forces during their occupation of Kuwait.

Assembly Holds Secret Session on Security

93AE0221B London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
22 Dec 92 p 4

[Article by Husayn 'Abd-al-Rahman and Nasir al-Mutayri: "Kuwaiti National Assembly To Discuss Security Issue Today, Possibly in Closed Session"]

[Text] Kuwait—Today, Kuwaiti Interior Minister Shaykh Ahmad al-Humud al-Sabah will present to the National Assembly an official statement on the security policy and the plan embraced by his ministry to maintain domestic security.

The interior minister's statement comes in response to the debate request submitted by five assembly members, namely Muhammad al-Marshad, 'Abdallah al-Rumi, 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-'Adasani, Ahmad Muhammad al-Nassar, and Salih Yusuf al-Fidalah. The request calls for presenting the country's security plan to debate; for clarifying the plan's general policy, its mainstays, and how comprehensive and effective it is; and for an exchange of opinions on it.

Noting that he is opposed to a closed session, Deputy Khalaf Dumaythir has said that there is no need to hold today's session behind closed doors so that all can learn the facts because "we have nothing to hide."

Government sources have noted that the interior minister's statement will cover what the ministry has done regarding the Kuwaiti group whose members were

arrested while in possession of a large quantity of weapons that were stored in a residential area outside the city of Kuwait.

Even though the group members have alleged in preliminary interrogations that they had planned to export these weapons to Bosnia-Herzegovina, the Interior Ministry referred the defendants, including a major in the special forces and an Army lieutenant, to the public prosecutor. The Interior Ministry statement will also cover the efforts made by the ministry in collecting weapons from citizens and confiscating the largest quantity, 1,000 kg, of drugs brought into the country.

Parliamentary reports indicate that there has been an effort by a number of deputies, including 'Ayid 'Allush al-Mutayri, to hold today's session on the security issue behind closed doors so as to give deputies the greatest opportunity to discuss and examine the security plan "because confidentiality offers the minister the opportunity to talk without reservation."

But Dr. Isma'il al-Shatti, the Assembly's Finance and Economy Committee chairman, has made it clear that he sees no need for a closed session to discuss the security policy, noting that he would agree to a closed session if the discussion concerned the Defense Ministry's defense policy and emergency plan.

Despite this, certain parliamentary sources have expressed the belief that today's session will be held behind closed doors for the first time since Kuwait's parliament was resumed in October 1992.

These sources attribute their speculation on a closed session to the sensitive nature of the item that will be presented for general discussion and the fact that it concerns the issue of security. It is expected that the discussion will provoke numerous matters pertaining to the security aspect. There will also be a frank exchange of opinions, considering that deputies will discuss issues more freely.

It should be noted that security concerns have overwhelmed the Kuwaiti National Assembly debates since the start of the current session. Including this issue on the general discussion agenda will enable deputies to participate in the discussion on a large scale because the issue concerns citizens in the various districts.

Deputy Dr. Nasir al-Sani' has told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that the security issue represents a priority that the National Assembly places among the most important and vital issues. He also pointed out that today's session comes in the wake of a request by some deputies to submit the issue to a general debate.

In a related development, Dr. Nasir al-Sani', the Foreign Affairs Committee rapporteur, has submitted a special report on the tour made by the committee, along with National Assembly Speaker Ahmad al-Sa'dun, to the GCC [Gulf Cooperation Council] member states last week. According to the committee chairman, the report

contains details of the tour and the discussions held with the leaders of the Arab Gulf states and the officials of their consultative institutions.

Jasim Muhammad al-Saqr, the Foreign Affairs Committee chairman, expressed the hope that the leaders of the GCC states will succeed, at their current summit in Abu-Dhabi, in adopting resolutions compatible with the existing challenges and with the current conditions that engulf the region.

Meanwhile, al-Saqr has declined to comment on whether today's session will be an open or closed session, noting that this is determined by the government or by the deputies and in accordance with an agreement reached in this regard.

Iraqi Collaborator 'Ala' Husayn's Trial

93AE0221A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
20 Dec 92 p 2

[Article by Muhammad al-Dumayyan: "'Ala' Husayn Tried in Absentia; Kuwaiti State Security Court Continues To Examine 'Provisional Government' Case"]

[Text] Kuwait—The Kuwaiti State Security Court will continue today to examine the case of the "provisional Kuwaiti government" that was imposed by the Iraqi regime during its occupation of Kuwait. The State Security Prosecution exonerated the members of that government after their interrogation was completed and after it became evident that they had no criminal plans against Kuwait's sovereignty and that they had been compelled to join the alleged government.

However, developments of the interrogation led to accusations against 'Ala' Husayn, the head of the "provisional government" who has not returned to Kuwait with his military colleagues who were appointed to the government by the invading forces.

The State Security Court, headed by Salah al-Fahd, has summoned defendants tried in previous sessions to testify on the charges made against 'Ala' Husayn, who is being tried in absentia on the charge of collaborating with the occupation forces and heading the so-called "provisional Kuwaiti government," which tried to weaken the citizens' morale.

In a related development, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT has learned that the court will remain in session until next year because of the large number of defendants involved in the state security cases referred to the court.

It should be noted that the Kuwaiti State Security Court is a special court that has been convened temporarily to consider the cases referred to it that involve the undermining Kuwait's state security.

LEBANON

Minister Urges Media To Identify Israel as Enemy

NC1012154392 Shanayh Voice of the Mountain
in Arabic 1230 GMT 10 Dec 92

[Text] Information Minister Michel Samahah has warned television and radio stations not to broadcast immoral serials or programs. Speaking at a meeting with media officials in the Information Ministry, he announced: "I do not wish to keep this secret from you. Any television station that still broadcasts such shows will be forced to close. Public morality cannot be assaulted."

Minister Samahah added: "This issue has no connection with freedom of expression. We will begin to enforce the law in these institutions from today. There will be a general framework within which everyone will operate to stop such shows before the law organizing the media is passed."

Samahah, speaking in the presence of press doyen Muhammad al-Ba'labakki, urged the media to exercise self-discipline to stay in harmony with our heritage and our affiliation with our homeland and region. He said: "This is not a political issue but a question of rebuilding the individual who has an intimate relationship with his homeland and Arab milieu."

He added: "Many complaints are being received about television stations—the violent shows and diabolical messages that are presented by programs through music and the deification of the devil."

On politics, the information minister said: "I ask nothing more than that you identify the enemy and declare that the border strip is an occupied strip, that Israel is the enemy, and that the resistance is honorable and patriotic."

Minister Samahah called on media representatives to attend another meeting next Monday [14 December] to draw up an operational document that will form the basis of a charter of honor.

OMAN

Industrial Production Reaches \$500 Million

93AE0212A London AL-HAYAH in Arabic
12 Dec 92 p 12

[Interview with Maqbul Bin-'Ali Sultan, Omani minister of commerce and industry, by Husayn 'Abd-al-Ghani; place and date not given: "Omani Minister of Commerce and Industry to AL-HAYAH: Industry's Contribution to Domestic Product Rises to \$500 Million in 1992"]

[Text] Muscat—Maqbul Bin-'Ali Sultan, Oman's minister of commerce and industry, has said that two years (1991-92) of emphasis on industry will raise the Omani

industry's contribution to the domestic product to nearly 190 million riyals (\$500 million) by this year's end.

Sultan, who assumed his post this year, has asserted that Oman has begun to shift during the year from the "light and consumption" industry strategy that it has embraced since 1975 to "medium and heavy" industry and from the policy of production to replace imports to the policy of production for export.

In an interview with AL-HAYAH, the Omani minister has revealed that the Omani Government is studying heavy industry projects, including a petrochemicals complex, which will cost \$600 million. Maqbul denied that the sultanate plans to establish a free industrial zone in one of Oman's ports, as some neighboring countries have done. He noted that the policy of offering tax, customs, and other incentives to foreign investors is more effective in developing local industry and attracting foreign investment. The following is the text of the interview:

[Abd-al-Ghani] By this month's end, the sultanate will have completed two national years devoted to local industry. Has anything been actually accomplished for the industrial sector, whether in horizontal expansion (number of plants, industrial infrastructure) or in qualitative expansion (type of plants, their contribution to GDP [gross domestic product], and their absorption of local workforce)?

[Sultan] The two years devoted to industry have been characterized by promoting and bolstering industrial development. This has enabled a number of plants to come into existence. Statistics show that nearly 230 projects of all sizes have been registered, and their investments have been estimated at 29 million Omani riyals or \$75 million. The ministry has also approved 676 new projects, with investments estimated at nearly 80 million riyals, or \$208 million, in the period from January 1991 to September 1992.

The industrial infrastructure projects have also developed. The main industrial zone in al-Rusayl has been expanded and inaugurated. The first phase of the new industrial zones in Raysut, the southern part of Zufar Governorate, and Suhar, in the north (al-Batinah), were also inaugurated amidst the sultanate's celebration of the 22d anniversary of its national day last November.

Preliminary studies to select the proper sites for industrial zones that will be established in the Musandam Governorate and in the provinces of Sur, Nazwa, and al-Buraymi have reached an advanced stage. The two years devoted to industry (1991-92) have also been distinguished by the prevalence of new kinds of industries, such as fishing, ready-made clothing, pharmaceuticals, and chemicals. This has led to diversifying the industrial activities in which the private sector has risked investing, as it has led to increasing the industrial sector's contribution to the GDP.

Even though this contribution is relatively small if compared with oil, for example, the industrial sector has developed greatly. In 1991, this sector contributed 4.5 percent of the gross product, amounting to 168 million riyals and reflecting a growth rate of 10.4 percent. A greater growth rate is expected in 1992 and we expect the sector's contribution to amount to nearly 190 million Omani riyals, or nearly \$500 million.

Domestic workforce employment conditions in the industrial sector have also developed because of government encouragement, which has reached the point of adopting the well-known program, in accordance with which the government shoulders the salaries of Omani workers for a period of three years and pays the training costs incurred by private sector establishments to train these workers.

The basic industrialization strategy also encompasses certain criteria, including the requirement that a strategic project realize 30 percent national labor employment. To acquire the subsidy, it is also required that a project achieve a 25 percent Omanization rate. The ministry has also organized several management training courses for employees of the private industrial sector. Moreover, it has organized tours for Omani investors to visit a number of advanced countries to familiarize themselves with the expertise of these countries and with what they have been able to accomplish in the area of industry.

Heavy Industries

[Abd-al-Ghani] It has been reported that the sultanate will enter the field of heavy industry. What are the reasons for this transformation in the existing Omani industrialization strategy which is based on light industries? When will implementation of heavy industry projects begin, what are dimensions of the investment in these projects, and what is their expected production?

[Sultan] If we examine the economic strategy when the first five-year (1975-80) plan was drafted, we find that the start was based on the principle of diversifying the sources of income and reducing reliance on oil. Therefore, industry had to be encouraged. But because of the lack of infrastructure and of laws to subsidize industry at the time and because the emphasis was put on projects to replace imports, we had to begin with small projects involving small capital.

Those projects did not require large investments, and they were not promoted. But with accelerating development and with the discovery of numerous local natural resources, efforts had to be made to utilize these projects in major economic projects. Numerous studies were conducted, most significantly a study by UNIDO [UN Industrial Development Organization], which made it clear that we had to embark on major projects based not only on import replacement, but also on exporting. The studies proved that because of the small population (less than 2 million citizens and residents), replacement

projects are not convenient and that there has to be exportation in order to set up major heavy and medium industry projects.

In this regard, the projects under consideration include a petrochemicals project to produce polyethylene and polypropylene at an estimated production capacity of 300,000 tons annually and at a cost of nearly \$600 million. Preliminary studies have been completed for this project, which will utilize basically natural gas discovered in the country. We have entered now the phase of detailed studies for the project, such as proper site and appropriate foreign technological cooperation. If detailed studies prove the project to be feasible, it is expected that implementation will begin before the end of the current fourth five-year plan (1991-95).

As for gypsum, iron, steel, and other projects, the government encourages the private sector to take the initiative and implement these projects by supplying this sector with relevant feasibility studies and data.

Regarding the gypsum project, the ministry is conducting a study on producing gypsum sheets made of gypsum and paper waste. The project will have a production capacity of 17 million square meters [annually], and its cost is estimated at \$50 million. The government has already issued an industrial license for a sponge iron project that will have a production capacity of 800,000 tons annually and that will cost an estimated 69 million riyals, or \$179 million.

Gulf Capital

[Abd-al-Ghani] Despite the industrial incentives offered by the Omani Government to attract Gulf and foreign capital to invest in Oman's industry, what these incentives have attracted so far is small. External investment has not exceeded 6.5 million riyals in the past five years, and foreign investment has not exceeded \$63 million. What is the explanation for this disinterest, and is it possible the government will resort to setting up free industrial zones similar to those set up by some Gulf states to attract major industrial investments?

[Sultan] As I have noted in the answer to the preceding question, in the past, Oman's industry focused on small projects. Local capital was available for these projects, and there was no need to promote either Gulf or foreign investment in such projects. But with the shift to medium and big projects now, we believe that we can attract these investments. The sultanate's foreign investment laws are being reviewed so they can be made compatible with the country's industrial development conditions. At the same time, we are working to attract capital from outside the sultanate to invest in these projects. In this phase, there are big projects that depend on local raw materials and that require expertise and technologies compatible with their dimensions. We are trying to inject these projects with joint capital. This will lead to increased foreign investment in Oman.

As for establishing free zones to attract foreign investment, I can say that the ministry has no plans in this regard. We are content currently to promote the industrial zones that have already been created for joint projects between the Omani and foreign private sector. We believe that in the case of the sultanate, the benefits ordinarily desired from free zones will not be realized.

Small Projects

[Abd-al-Ghani] There has been talk for a time about dozens of small projects, for which feasibility studies have been conducted in cooperation with Gulf and Indian establishments and which have been offered to industrial investors. Has any of these projects gone beyond the sphere of contemplation and seen the light?

[Sultan] The Gulf Industrial Investment Organization conducted the first group of studies, which were actually presented to the private sector for investment. The studies covered 20 projects, of which 10 were designated for the Suhar industrial zone and the other 10 for the Raysut industrial zone.

The ministry has received 64 applications from investors wishing to implement these projects.

As for the second group, i.e., the group of studies conducted by NIDC [National Industrial Development Corporation], an Indian firm, and totaling 20 in number, they focus on small industries. A total of 170 applications have been submitted to implement them. These applications are being sorted and evaluated at present in preparation for awarding the projects to investors in accordance with the abovementioned principles.

The new industrial subsidy program that has been adopted by the government applies to these projects. In accordance with this program, the ministry provides unrepayable capital "grants" to Omani investors wishing to set up industrial projects costing less than 100,000 riyals (\$260,000).

Number of Banks to Shrink Below 10 by 1994

93AE0214A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
5 Dec 92 p 11

[Report from Muscat: "Rumors and Test Balloons Dominate the Market After the Merger of 'Muscat' and 'al-Ahli'; Omani Banks Have Two Options: Merge or Boost Capitalization"]

[Text] The announcement by the Omani National Bank [al-Ahli] and the Bank of Muscat to merge under the name "National Commercial Bank of Muscat" caused wide reverberations in the banking sector of the Sultanate of Oman. Sources said that the measure "crossed a major psychological barrier" and described it as "the initial spark that would light the way to a series of mergers among commercial banks in countries that suffer intense competition for limited markets."

Even though most local commercial bank officials agree on the value of mergers and the benefits that could accrue to the national economy and to merging banks, many difficulties of form and substance still prevent any marked progress in that direction; so much so that many banking officials believe that "it is one thing to recognize the value of and the need for mergers, but it is quite another to actually head in that direction."

Other banking sources, however, believe that the Muscat-al-Ahli merger has coaxed other banks to abandon caution, reluctance, and indecision, and induced them to move in search of potential partners with which they could enter into similar mergers. The sources emphasized that such moves have reduced obstacles of form to a great extent, leaving obstacles of substance under the microscope, which could eventually lead to agreements in principle.

The sources point out that there are certain banks that are quite comparable in capitalization and the size of deposits, reserves, and liabilities and that these banks would likely be merger candidates except that they still differ on such formalities as the bylaws of merged banks and the selection of their board members and chairmen. The sources elucidated: "While many consider those to be simple matters that could be dealt with quickly, in accordance with specific standards, the fact is that such problems remain difficult to resolve, except in the case of Muscat and al-Ahli banks, which are comfortable with the principles of their merger even though the details are to be made known at a later date. While both institutions trailed the list of banks operating in Oman, the National Commercial Bank of Muscat will have a capital of nearly 16 million Omani riyals and will be one of the largest banks in the sultanate.

The Central Bank had called upon the country's 21 commercial banks to merge into bigger and stronger banking units that are highly financially fit and therefore better able to meet domestic and international challenges. The Central Bank left it up to commercial banks to choose their merger partners and chart their own course without mandatory regulations. However, Central Bank regulations issued a few months ago raised minimum domestic bank capitalization to 10 million riyals, or about \$26 million, and gave the banks until the end of 1993 to comply. Those who do not will face consequences that are unspecified as yet.

A Question of Survival

Ahmad 'Abd-al-Nabi Makki, vice chairman of the Central Bank's board of governors, emphasized that mergers are of value for banking sector development and for strengthening bank positions. He said that "mergers have become a matter of survival for the banks."

Banking sources consider capitalization regulations to be direct Central Bank pressure on commercial banks to pursue the mergers that are now considered an urgent domestic requirement in view of competition among

banks and of heavy operating burdens. Monetary authorities are convinced that bigger and stronger banking units will be better able to serve the national economy and protect depositor interests because they will be capable of dealing with and weathering both domestic and world economic disruptions.

The Central Bank not only advocates for mergers but has also announced worthwhile incentives for banks to take that step. Notable among those incentives are long-range deposits of 10 million Omani riyals at no interest, or with concessionary interest of no more than 3 percent, to any two merging partners. Merged banks will also be exempt from the tax on commercial profit for a period of 5 years and could also be entitled to other future facilities if they commit to Central Bank policies aiming at reducing the number of banks to less than 10 before 1994.

Rumors and Pulse Feelers

Mansur Bin-Talib al-Zakwani, secretary general of the Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry and chairman of the chamber's banking committee, emphasized that a number of domestic banks are looking into mergers by making contacts, feeling pulses, initiating rumors, and launching test balloons, and that such efforts could lead to new mergers in the [banking] sector.

He explained: "Small banks have until the end of 1992 [as published] to increase their capital to 10 million dinars or to merge for that purpose if they so wish."

Asked by AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT whether the Central Bank is likely to again raise minimum capitalization to another level, to 20 million dinars, for instance, if current regulations fails to prompt bank mergers, al-Zakwani responded: "Banks may do the impossible to raise their capital by any means, but they need to be empirical in assessing their ability to perform and compete. They should not merely raise capital in order to survive and keep their chairmen and their presidents in their seats regardless of performance and of value realized for shareholders."

Of the role the chamber's banking committee could play in fostering and propelling mergers, al-Zakwani said that "we could act as liaison among banks or between them and concerned government agencies. Some banks need to know if they will be offered other merger incentives while others have certain requests that they would like to discuss. We, as a chamber, are ready to act as mediator in this regard."

He pointed out that the chamber is currently arranging an expanded seminar on mergers and their objectives and benefits. The forum, to be held next year and attended by bank owners and major shareholders, will discuss various merger issues, as well as the experiences of other countries with mergers.

QATAR

Foreign Competition on Gas Products Project

93AE0206A London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 7 Dec 92 p 9

[Article by Randah Taqiy-al-Din]

[Text] Paris—AL-HAYAH has learned from French petroleum industry sources that the French company Total will propose that the American Mobil Oil Company take 10 percent of its 35 percent share in the production section of the gas production project in the northern field in Qatar. Thus the American company will have an equal share in the project's processing and export operations.

Total has 35 percent of this field with the Qatar Gas and Petroleum Company (QGPC), with Qatar owning 65 percent in the production section of Qatar Gas exports. This calls for processing 4 to 6 million tons of gas a year for 25 years for the Japanese company (Shobo). Exports are to begin in January 1997.

Mobil's entry into the production section, with 10 percent of Total's share in this section of the Qatar Gas project, will bring to an end the American company's ambitions, which, upon joining the Qatar Gas Company, replaced the British Petroleum, which left the Qatar Gas Company for purely financial reasons after having tried to acquire the lion's share of the project's production sector. The QGPC owns 60 percent of the processing and refining sector, while Mobil, Marubeni, and Mitsui each own 10 percent.

The Qatar Gas project is integrated in the production sector. Total owns 35 percent of it, while the rest is owned by QGPC. Total was ready to take over field production management, while the other sector, gas processing and export, belongs to Qatar Gas project. Mobil tried to take over the management of the production section and exclude Total by appointing a general manager for the integrated project—that is, the integrated production and processing section—from Mobil. Mobil hoped to obtain a principal position in the project management, but Total did not accept this because it has been carrying out production work since 1984. Total asked that the general manager be from Qatar or from Total. But the issue was determined when the Qatari authorities appointed Dr. Jabir al-Marri, general manager of QGPC and chairman of the board of directors of Qatar Gas, as general manager of the integrated project. Thus Dr. al-Marri became general manager of the entire project, helped by three assistant managers: a Qatari to manage financial affairs, someone from Total to manage the production section, and someone from Mobil to manage the gas section. The goal is for the industry's management team to be a mixture of all the companies so that Mobil will not be managing the project alone. Total's contract with Qatar on the gas production project is based on production participation.

In 1991, Total signed a contract with QGPC concerning the production section. It then signed a new contract last summer, which was a revision of the 1991 contract, because of new circumstances relating to new production plans.

Since the development plan changed, the cost has changed. This called for revising the economic terms, because during the talks held among Qatar, the partners in Qatar Gas, and the Japanese buyer Shobo, the accepted concept has changed. It is a question of technical change relating to gas production and processing, which calls for greater expense and larger investments. Therefore, a review was to be carried out of the economic terms of the partnership contract that Total signed after the investment cost reached about \$800 million, compared with a previous estimate of \$500 million.

The contract refers to the possibility of changes in the circumstances involving costs. The partnership contract, according to oil industry sources, is based on gas production. And since gas does not belong to the producing partner, production is paid for by quantities of condensers to be shared by the partners, as if it were a condenser field. Part of this includes the "oil profit." The major part of the profits goes to the Qatari partner.

A field produces 40,000 barrels of condensers per day. The profits are based on the price per barrel of these condensers, that is, \$18 to \$20 per barrel. What is new in this system is that the QGPC has also become a partner in the production partnership contract. Previously Total owned 100 percent of the production section. But Total's share became 35 percent, which it should share with the foreign partner that will join the partnership, that is, Mobil, if this company accepts to take a 10 percent share.

In the partnership contract, 20 percent will remain for Total, instead of 100 percent, as was the case at the beginning. In addition to its offer of 10 percent for Mobil, another 5 percent will go to a Japanese company.

The contract states that it will officially come into effect in early 1977. But a slight delay might occur because of the changes introduced in the contract, unless the Japanese partner insists that its request for Qatari gas from Qatar Gas Company be delivered on a specified date. In which case, the partners will hasten to implement the project. The decision is up to the buyer, and it depends on the work the buyer is carrying out and his ability to complete the construction of docks to receive the gas tankers and the conditions of economic recession in Japan. It also depends on the completion of the Ra's Laffan Port, which is now under construction. It is a project that is independent from Qatar Gas project, which is being built by the QGPC company in cooperation with an Italian firm and which is part of the services the Qatari authorities will provide for the project before exports begin.

SUDAN

Details Reported on Training Camps

93AF0300 Algiers LIBERTE in French 9 Dec 92 p 7

[Final installment of an article translated from the Arabic by Fatema Khalfoun: "Revelations on Training Camps in Sudan; 450 Iranians Land in Khartoum as Algiers-Tehran Crisis Reaches a Climax"—first three paragraphs are LIBERTE introduction]

[Text] The camp in the central territory is supervised by Slimane Mohammed Slimane, a member of the ruling council; with six companies of three battalions each it is the largest camp, and it regroups fundamentalists from Yemen, Egypt, Algeria, Somalia, and Kenya.

As a result of its increasing presence in Sudan, Iran recently opened a consulate in Port Sudan; it operates in liaison with sheik Hassan Ettourabi's information and monitoring bureau at the Friendship Palace in Khartoum.

Some observers reported that Iranian guests had been staying at the Grand Hotel for over two years, so that it has become possible to know the time of arrival and departure of this convoy.

There are about 500 men in the camp. They attend lectures by Islamic Front cadres and get training provided by members of the Iranian revolutionary guard. There are also Pakistani volunteers. The company of this camp also took part in the Mogadishu fight. The militias of the interim Somali president, Ali Mehdi Mohamed, captured five of them, who were released after General Omar el-Bachir's intervention last February. Another company of the camp took part in the war started in the Melkal territory, in southern Sudan.

Some were killed there.

Lieutenant Colonel Sadiq-el-Fadhi supervises a new camp that was added to the Kardi military prison, while Lt. Col. Abdel Mounuim Chekka supervises another camp located in the plantation that Islamic Front authorities confiscated from citizen en-Naim el-Bakraoui, which now houses 17 Afghans, 24 Tunisians, 16 Algerians, and new members of the people's defense forces.

The Grand Hotel extends along the left bank of the Blue Nile, a few hundred meters from where it joins with the White Nile, under the giant bridge that was built at the time of Marshall Abboud. Between the river and the hotel, there is a shaded street, the nicest in the capital of the two Niles. Every morning, the motorcade of Gen. el-Bachir, chairman of the Salvation Leadership Council, crosses this street that, starting from the Republican Palace, is only 1 km from the Grand Hotel. As a result, hotel guests wake up every morning to the sound of the sirens of escort cars armed to the hilt with Chinese rapid-fire machine guns, the muzzles of which protrude

through the windows of the Jeeps and the black Mercedes. The people who come to the hotel cafe or to the hotel balcony to watch the flute and muscle-parade Carnival can testify to the quality of the "guests" of this noble hotel.

When the Grand Hotel cannot house all the guests, some stay at another hotel: the downtown Sudan Hotel. On the other hand, very important guests—usually security experts or military personnel—stay at the Hilton Hotel, the one whose foyer witnessed, in 1985, the murder of the Iraqi opposition member Mehdi el-Hakim, the brother of Bather el-Hakim who lives in Tehran.

As for "guard" leaders and Iranian political delegates, they are entitled to houses, located in particular in Madani and Kober, outside of Khartoum. Well-informed sources report that, at the height of the verbal war between Algiers and Tehran, a large convoy of Iranians (about 450 people) shared the two hotels, Grand Hotel and Sudan Hotel; according to some rumors, these were security agents whose mission was to help the regime restructure and reorganize the army and the security and intelligence departments following a series of dissidence, cleaning-up, and early-retirement operations. Many developments were taking place within the security departments until recently, and this prompted el-Bachir and his security advisers to take measures to catch up and save the regime. These developments included:

1. The dissidence of senior officers of the security department working in Sudanese embassies in Western Europe.
2. The defection of some officers resulted in the closing of the military annex of the London embassy. The other military annexes, in Washington and Bonn, were closed in September.
3. During the last three days, the flight to foreign countries coincided with purges among the army and security departments. The last "early-retirement batch" consisted of 368 officers and included eight generals, seven colonels, and 100 commanders.
4. Reliable sources mentioned a plan to rebuild the Sudanese Army; the plan is said to have reached the polishing stage and would be implemented early in 1993. It is said to provide for a purge of the present army, which would be rebuilt according to the Iraqi method—around a solid core. This core is none other than the seventh armored [regiment] headed by Captain Ibrahim Chemss Eddine, member of the Revolution Leadership Council.

Sudanese returning from Madani reported that el-Bachir has formed a sort of Sudanese KGB, with several classes, roles, and missions. Its members are armed and come from the Ettourabi movement rank and file.

Thus, according to the EL WATAN EL ARABI journalists' investigation, it turned out that sheik Ettourabi, with Iran's self-serving help, has woven a web from which el-Bachir may find it hard to escape.

Foreign Affairs Minister Outlines Policy

93AF0256A Khartoum AL-QUWAT AL-MUSALLAHAH in Arabic 20 Nov 92 p 3

[Radio Interview With Foreign Minister 'Ali Ahmad Sahlul by BBC Reporter Simon Ingram at the minister's office, presented by 'Abd-al-Halim al-Fawr; date not given: "Foreign Minister to BBC: What Is Reported in Foreign Media About Our Foreign Policy Shuns Truth"]

[Text] Sudan's foreign policy and what is rumored about the dangers it poses, Sudan's attempt to export the Islamic revolution, the nature of the relationship between Sudan and the West, and is Sudan isolated now?

Simon Ingram, the BBC resident correspondent in Cairo, has addressed these questions and others to Foreign Minister 'Ali Ahmad Sahlul in the radio interview he conducted with him at his office in the ministry:

Minutes of a BBC Reporter's Interview With His Excellency the Minister

[Ingram] What is the government philosophy on foreign policy?

[Sahlul] A lot is being said by the international media about Sudan's foreign policy, and a lot is being reiterated about the dangers this policy poses to some countries. The answer to this is that our foreign policy is governed by specific priorities, namely:

- Preserving security and stability.
- Dealing with the rebellion in Sudan and working to solve this problem through negotiation and by developing political solutions for it.
- Working to improve the country's economic conditions by relying on our intrinsic capabilities.

To a large degree, we have succeeded in establishing security and stability along our eastern and western borders, and we have restored fraternal relations with Ethiopia, Chad, and Central Africa. Moreover, we have concluded a security accord with Uganda. Therefore, what is circulated by the foreign media often shuns the truth.

[Ingram] Is Sudan working to export the Islamic revolution?

[Sahlul] Applying the Islamic shari'ah in Sudan is an issue that predates this revolution and that dates back to Numayri's administration, specifically. The three political parties that have represented the main weight in Sudan's political arena underlined their eagerness to apply the Islamic shari'ah through the political platforms with which they waged the 1986 election. This confirms that this issue is not new to Sudan and that there is no basis to what is being said about Sudan exporting the Islamic revolution. To make the truth clear, there is a worldwide phenomenon, i.e., the phenomenon of Islamic revival. It is true that the strength of this phenomenon varies according to the local conditions of each

country concerned. Sudan has no hand in exporting the Islamic revolution to these countries.

Sudan's economic, military, and political capabilities are very limited. So, the problem is in what is propagated by foreign media and by some governments that are preparing to antagonize Sudan. Any political observer or commentator wishing to be honest and objective has to visit Sudan to see for himself, instead of relying on other sources, most of which are tendentious and some of which willfully spread misleading information about Sudan.

[Ingram] What is the nature of your relationship with the West, which calls for democracy and safeguarding human rights and demands an end to the war in the south?

[Sahlul] What the Western countries are practicing amounts to no more than political pressures. This kind of pressures does not promote the accomplishment of a peaceful political solution in the south. Inversely, it encourages the rebellion movement to persist in its intransigent positions. We hope that Western governments will pressure the insurgents to come to the negotiating table instead of persisting in the war and the rebellion.

As for the human rights issue, as a result of what the Western media say against Sudan, society thinks that Sudan is the only country where human rights are violated. This is misleading. In Sudan, human rights have been, are, and will continue to be guaranteed. We have no detention camps, and there is not a single political prisoner in Sudan now, because the last political prisoner has been released.

This is happening at a time when numerous countries that friendly to the West practice the ugliest forms of human rights violations in detention camps that are swarming with thousands of detainees. Why do the Western governments remain silent about these countries?

[Ingram] In light of Sudan's current isolation, what are the priorities of your foreign relations?

[Sahlul] I wish to emphasize that we have relations with numerous and varied countries, which belies what is rumored about Sudan's isolation. What is surprising is that this allegation is made at a time when we have gained control of our decision-making and our rights, and a degree of intrinsic independence. Some Western countries are not pleased to see Sudan attain this goal. This explains their hostile conduct toward Sudan. Other countries have become victims of the lack of correct information about Sudan. As for the priorities of our foreign relations, we focused in the past on the Middle East and the Arab family. But we seek now to strengthen our relations with the African and Asian countries and to equalize and balance these relations with our Arab relations. We have made a long stride in this regard.

Party Leaders Appointed in Khartoum

93AF0256B London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 24 Nov 92
p 7

[Article by 'Umar Muhammad al-Hasan: "Al-Bashir Appoints Party Figures to Manage Khartoum Province"]

[Text] Khartoum—Sudanese President Lieutenant General 'Umar Hasan al-Bashir has issued a decree appointing former Information Minister Muhammad Khawjali al-Salihin chairman of the Khartoum Province Popular Salvation Committee. This committee is in charge of drawing up the policies and plans implemented by the governor. Al-Bashir has surprised the Sudanese by appointing prominent leaders of banned political parties and Sudanese notables who enjoy broad social influence as members of the committee.

It is to be noted that al-Bashir has signed the decree in his capacity as the "head of state" for the first time since he assumed power in 1989. Official decrees have been ordinarily signed in the name of the "Revolution Command Council chairman." It is not known if there is any constitutional or organizational change behind the new title.

The decree appoints a number of former leaders of the opposition Democratic Party, namely: Dr. al-Fatih al-Tijani, the minister of agriculture in al-Sadiq al-Mahdi government; Majdhub Talhah, former commissioner of the capital; al-Khalifah al-Siddiq al-Hindi; Hasan Abu-Sabib; Ahmad 'Umar 'Abd-al-Salam; Khalid Muhammad Siddiq Talhah; and Muhammad al-Husayn Ahmad, known as Wad al-Husayn.

In addition to al-Salihin, the committee chairman, the decree also appoints the following leaders of former President Ja'far Numayri's administration: Major General Kamal Husayn Ahmad, a former deputy chairman of the State Security Agency; Major General Babakr 'Ali al-Tawm, a former commissioner of the capital; and Attorney Badriyah Sulayman, former legal adviser to Numayri. From al-Ummah Party, which is headed by al-Sadiq al-Mahdi, the committee includes as members Bakhit al-Hadi al-Mahdi, the former prime minister's cousin; (al-Fadil) 'Awad Jalal-al-Din, the party youth official; al-Fadil Azraq; and Ya'qub Harun, a businessman. The appointments have included the following from the National Islamic Front: Air Vice Marshal al-Fatih 'Abdun, a former commissioner of the capital, and al-Tayyib Ahmad al-Nuss, a businessman.

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

Government Issues 1993 Draft Budget

93AE0246 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
12 Jan 91 p 9

[Article by Taj-al-Din 'Abd-al-Haq]

[Text] The UAE [United Arab Emirates] cabinet yesterday approved the state's draft budget for 1993. This is the first budget in nearly a decade that the cabinet had approved so early.

The budget's total expenditures reached 17.6309 billion dirhams, compared with last year's budget of 17.3769 billion dirhams, which was issued in February 1992.

Budget revenues have dropped slightly. They are estimated at 15.911 billion dirhams, while last year's revenues were 15.914 billion dirhams.

The budget deficit this year increased to approximately 1.72 billion dirhams, compared with 1.462 billion dirhams.

The government's approval of the draft budget is regarded as the major step before the budget is issued by a federal decree signed by Shaykh Sultan Al Nuhayyan, which is expected to be issued in a few days' time.

Although the cabinet yesterday approved a decree forming the Federal National Council, it is unlikely that the law approving the budget will pass through the legislative authority, since this law is expected to be issued before the Federal National Assembly is convened. Therefore, there is no constitutional obligation that the budget should be submitted to the Federal National Assembly.

In addition to approving the general budget, the UAE cabinet also approved a number of independent, attached budgets, including the Federal National Assembly budget, which totaled 15.05 million dirhams, compared with 15.06 million dirhams last year.

The approval also includes the UAE University budget, with a total of 511 million dirhams, compared with 543.1 million dirhams last year; the Higher Technical College budget, with a total of 138.5 million dirhams, compared with 136.78 million dirhams last year; the Public Authority for Information budget, with a total of 16.2 million dirhams, compared with 16 million dirhams last year; and, finally, the Administration Development Academy budget with a total of 7.2 million dirhams, compared with 6.8 million dirhams last year.

With the expected issuance of the UAE budget this month, the UAE will have gone beyond the stage of submitting the budget by a constitutionally fixed date [at the end of the fiscal year]. In certain years in the past, the budget was issued during the last week of the fiscal year.

But about four years ago, the issuing of the budget gradually began to become regular. The 1991 budget was issued in June, and the 1992 budget was issued in March.

Issuing the budget regularly is considered to be an important factor for the local economy. The ministries and government bodies are able to commit themselves to implementing the projects included in the federal budget, something that was impossible when the budget was issued late in the year.

UAE financial experts said that issuing the budget early could improve the government's average spending, which means that the theoretical deficit that characterized the UAE budget in past years could become a real deficit this year if all the approved allocations for the budget expenditures are spent in full.

The experts said that is premature to define the method by which the deficit is covered, because the UAE budget has never experienced real deficit since it came into being. The annual deficit used to be automatically written off due to the ministries not fully using all of the financial allocations earmarked for their expenditure because of the short time before the implementation of the budget law began.

In the few cases where some departments faced shortages in allocations, paying this shortage used to be done through transfers between certain articles of the budget or by issuing a special appendix for those departments.

With the possibility of a real deficit materializing, the government departments do not expect the UAE to resort to either foreign or local borrowing.

The sources said that although opportunities for foreign or local borrowing are open to the UAE by virtue of the strength of its economic resources and big financial

reserves, covering the budget deficit in case it materializes can be done by increasing the UAE's contributions to the budget.

The UAE government did not resort to foreign borrowing, but the local UAE governments borrowed from the foreign financial market in order to finance some of the service and development projects of their own.

According to what Minister of State for Financial and Industrial Affairs Ahmad al-Tayir said after the cabinet meeting yesterday, allocations to projects in the new budget have totaled 1.1 billion dirhams, while allocations for current expenditures totaled 16.4 billion dirhams, of which 5.7 billion dirhams are for wages and salaries.

He said the services ministries captured the largest proportion of projects. Some 200 million dirhams have been allocated for Ministry of Education projects; 350.7 million for Ministry of Public Works projects; 256.4 million for electrical projects; 67.7 million dirhams for maintenance work; and 62.2 million dirhams for Ministry of Interior projects.

Al-Tayir said a total of 2.55 million dirhams have been allocated for annuities and retirement awards, and 80 million dirhams have been allocated for the marriage subsidies fund.

IRAN

Liquid Gas Sale Offered to Public in Tehran

93AS0416D Tehran KEYHAN-E HAVA'I in Persian
30 Dec 92 p 11

[Text] Tehran-IRNA. 2 Dey [23 Dec]—To make best use of the environment, to fight air pollution, and to expedite the use of liquid gas in vehicles, the first liquid gas sales outlet was opened in Tehran.

Hashemi, executive director of the National Gas Company of Iran, gave a talk during the opening of this site. He said: As this station is being opened, the Majles, to make best use of the environment and to fight air pollution, has also allocated one percent of customs levies, commercial profits and imported passenger vehicle taxes for this purpose.

He said: To prevent air pollution, the final program to establish 40 gas fuel sales outlets has been designed, which will include 10 small stations with areas of 600 square meters and 10 large stations with areas of 3,000 square meters.

He said the subscription fee for liquid-gas-burning vehicles is 5,000 rials per month, and he invited the private sector to invest in the construction of small stations.

The executive director of the National Gas Company of Iran said: The goal is to convert high-consumption vehicles such as taxis and government vehicles to the use of liquid gas.

He said the cost of converting a gasoline-burning vehicle to liquid gas is about 700,000 rials.

Musavi, deputy mayor for transportation and shipping, also gave a talk on this subject. He said: Based on statistics at hand, 70 percent of Tehran's air pollution comes from public transportation vehicles, and in order to evaluate air pollution, air pollution evaluation centers will soon be established in Tehran.

He said: About 700,000 vehicles and the same number of motorcycles are operating in greater Tehran, and most of them have a great effect on environmental pollution.

He called these statistics approximate, and said: The beginning and ending statistical project, which was carried out last month, will provide us with precise statistics.

Musavi likewise said: Air pollution can be greatly reduced by improving the gasoline, the oil and the lights and by changing air filters and other motor parts.

He said the use of liquid gas is more economical. He said: Pollution from liquid gas is much less than gasoline. For this reason, last year and this year the municipality of Tehran imported 3,000 two-fuel automobiles for use as taxis.

The deputy mayor for transportation and shipping said: In a two-year period, with sufficient support for technical inspections of vehicles, monitoring of motorcycles and converting buses for liquid gas fuel use, we will be able to reduce air pollution by 50 percent.

He said: So far, useful work has been done in the area of converting the nation's diesel fuel motors to liquid gas, and we are not far away from what has been done in the world in this area. Soon a large number of urban buses will be burning liquid gas.

Restriction on Salary of Retirees Lifted

93AS0416F Tehran KEYHAN-E HAVA'I in Persian
30 Dec 92 p 4

[Text] Tehran. 30 Azar [21 Dec]. The National Retirement Organization will submit a bill to the Majles eliminating limitations on retiree salaries. If it is approved, the current ceiling on retiree salaries—18,000 tomans—will be removed.

According to 'Ezzatollah Dehqan, chief of the National Retirement Organization, the bill to remove the monthly ceiling of 18,000 tomans on national administrative and employment affairs retiree salaries is being submitted to the Majles for approval.

KEYHAN's correspondent in Kerman reports that during his trip to Kerman Dehqan told a gathering of reporters: Right now the ceiling on payments to retirees is 18,000 tomans, yet since the implementation of the Uniform Payments System Law, those with B.A. degrees and above earn 30,000 to 40,000 tomans in the final years of their service, and in view of the post-retirement law, their salaries will drop to 18,000 tomans.

He added: The National Retirement Organization pays two billion tomans per month to about 300,000 retired people, pensioners and heirs of retirees.

Need for Caspian Sea Free-Trade Zone Viewed

93AS0367A Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian
8 Dec 92 p 13

[Text] The creation of a free-trade zone in Bandar-e Anzali will have significant positive economic, social, political, and cultural effects on the region and the people; and officials of Gilan Province and the municipality of Anzali are impatiently demanding the implementation of this useful and constructive project.

Bandar-e Anzali, with an area of 275 square km and a population of more than 125,000, almost 100,000 of whom are urban residents, is in northwestern Gilan bounded by the cities of Rasht, Talesh, Fuman, and Sume'eh Sara, and located to the southwest of the Caspian Sea. It is one of the nation's important fishing ports, especially regarding catching and preparing caviar. A significant part of the nation's caviar is caught in the waters of the province of Gilan, and is prepared and

exported in Bandar-e Anzali, and it is considered a good source of foreign exchange for the nation.

Based on the latest statistics, more than 80 percent of the people of Bandar-e Anzali are literate. This municipality, with its port composition, has the smallest amount of affiliated villages among the nation's cities, and due to the shortage of rural areas, the urban population of this municipality, which has 28 registered villages, is more than 75 percent.

Most of the people in this municipality are employed in fishing. There is limited income from hosting tourists in the first half of the year [21 Mar-22 Sep], especially during the summer and tourist season.

The incomes of a limited part of the population of the municipality of Anzali, especially those on the coast connected with the hotel business and the tourist industry, has been endangered and minimized since the year 1367 [21 Mar 1988-20 Mar 1989] because of the rapid rise of the waters of the sea and the submerging of most of the beautiful coast of this area, as well as the heavy damage. Due to the failure of the development of fishing resources and fishing to keep pace with population growth either in the construction of docks and installations, and also due to the high costs of fishing vessels and equipment and the weak financial foundation of fishermen, this sector has also been held back. A comparison of the amount of fishing on the other side of the Caspian Sea with the fishing done on the coasts of our country illustrates this matter.

Although the appropriate officials speak of procuring fishing vessels and equipment, apparently one side of the problem is the cost of these things, for they cannot be purchased easily, and that cost influences the cost of the fishing catch for economic reasons. To put it more simply, currently, with the existing limitations, some coastal residents and other people in the coastal cities do not even have the possibility of taking part in the fishing sector.

In the wake of the same studies and the presentation of documented reasons to clarify the economic, social, and political effects of the free trade zone as well as the possibility of carrying out the aforementioned project, there are expert opinions in the province.

In recent weeks, the vice-regent's representative in the province and the Friday imam of Rasht, in talks on various occasions and in Friday sermons, gave a positive evaluation of implementing the free-trade zone and called for its establishment. The reasons given by the leader's representative in the province were based on economic growth, increased currency in circulation, creation of employment, and improving the conditions for making a living, both in this old and important port and throughout the province.

Engineer Taha'i, governor general of Gilan, also explained the necessity for creating the free-trade port. He said: To whatever extent we have an active and

constructive presence in the Central Asian republics, it will be profitable and this presence will be facilitated by a free-trade port.

He added: The goal is not free trade, but aid to the nation's industry and industrial production and in other productive areas to promote production. With the careful implementation of this policy, industry and also the province's other productive sectors will be strengthened.

IRNA reports from Rasht that Mr. Hashemi, general manager of the port and of Gilan Province Shipping, also emphasized the creation of a free-trade zone in Bandar-e Anzali. He said: Due to the economic conditions of the Baltic Sea and the Central Asian nations, who have been unable so far to establish a suitable economic situation, and in continued relations with these nations, there must be the possibility in the plan for exchanging goods with Eastern Europe and Japan, even though moving ships through the Volga-Don Canal requires the payment of huge fees and makes the shipment of goods expensive, and to some extent this will reduce the demand for the movement of East European ships. The creation of the free-trade zone requires the provision of extensive resources, and if the government and the Majles agree, these things must be made available in Anzali. Anzali already falls short in terms of hotels, guest facilities, commercial docks, services, administrative buildings and installations for a free port. With the preparation of these resources, planning and long-range thinking can solve some of the problems that now exist in the free ports.

Concerning the conversion of Anzali to a free-trade zone Eng. Alviri, secretary of the National Industrial Free-Trade Zones Council also said: There is no legal obstacle to this matter. With authorization from the government and approval from the Majles, a free-trade zone can be established in Anzali. He said: Under the first Five-Year Plan there were three free-trade zones in the country, all on the southern coasts.

He added: In view of the changes that have taken place in the nations on the shores of the Caspian Sea, it is justifiable economically to create a free port on the shores of the Caspian Sea.

He said: Currently, due to the expanded relations with neighboring countries to the north, the effort is to give priority to making a series of infrastructure investments to develop Anzali's resources and docks.

This includes building a new dock in this port for exporting nonoil goods and creating the necessary facilities. He noted: In view of the policies of the nations on the northern shores of the Caspian Sea to expand their economic relations with the Persian Gulf nations, the necessity for greater seriousness in the development of Bandar-e Anzali's installations for the purpose of transferring goods to neighboring nations via the Islamic

Republic of Iran is inevitable. He added: Taken together these measures will give significant economic power to the region.

Khuzestan Tribal Military Base Inaugurated

93AS0367F Tehran ABRAR in Persian 26 Nov 92 p 9

[Text] The formation of the tribal guard will complete the 20-million-man army.

At ceremonies opening the nation's largest tribal military base in the Lali district of Khuzestan, Commander General Moti'i, commander of the revolutionary guard district of Khuzestan, announced the above and said that the formation of the tribal guard is necessary. He said that problems from the war were the reason for the delay in its formation.

While stating that tribal security is necessary, he said that the reason for forming the tribal mobilization is to reinforce the foundation of tribal solidarity and to destroy the evil aims of enemies.

Likewise, he discussed the largest tribal area in the country, Lali, Bilaq and Qeshlaq, the tribes in Chahar Mahal, Lorestan, and Kohgiluyeh va Boyer Ahmad, and said that this base has great importance. He announced: While this base will employ the tribes and train them, it will arm the tribes and issue permits to armed individuals.

Then Hojjat ol-Eslam Musavi Jazayeri enumerated the characteristics of the popular armies since the beginning of Islam, and he compared the 20-million-man army to the world's other armies.

It is worth mentioning that the ceremonies opening the Lali Tribal Military Base of Khuzestan, which was done to mark Basij Week, were attended by Hojjat ol-Eslam Musavi Jazayeri, the vice-regent's representative, the Friday imam of Ahvaz, the temporary Friday imam of this city and local officials.

Army Medical School Ready To Accept Students

93AS0367E Tehran ABRAR in Persian 6 Dec 92 p 1

[Text] The independent Army Medical College will soon begin operating in the framework of the Officer's University, and it will begin accepting students as of the second half of the current academic year.

This was announced by General 'Abdollah Najafi, commander of the ground forces of the Army of the Islamic Republic of Iran, during an inspection of the procedure for administering the admission test at the Officer's University in Tehran. He added: Attention to academic issues is one of the most important programs in the ground forces. On this basis, this year, in view of the daily increasing progress of science and technology, four engineering programs have been added to the programs of the Officer's University. The News Department and the Army Ground Forces Public Relations Office report

that the Officer's University admissions test was given to thousands of applicants in Tehran and seven of the nation's large cities. Then, after academic and religious competence is established and physical examinations are given, 300 people will be admitted to this university.

Unemployment Hinders Kordestan Economic Expansion

93AS0367D Tehran ABRAR in Persian 23 Nov 92 p 9

[Text] Sanandaj—ABRAR Correspondent—Haji 'Abdol-Vahab, governor general of Kordestan, said yesterday: Currently unemployment is one of the basic obstacles in the path of the province's economic and cultural development. It will only be possible to contain it by recognizing existing areas, making the best use of the province's potential talents, and creating industrial areas in the urban and rural centers.

Speaking at a gathering of governors, Majles deputies, Friday imams, and provincial general managers, he added:

With the implementation of the agreement in principle and in the event that 600 billion rials credit and \$250 million in foreign exchange credit are obtained, 15,000 unemployed people in the province will be brought into the labor market.

Elsewhere in his talk the governor general of Kordestan said that alleviating the problems and developing the province will require the training of native manpower in the area, and he announced that special attention to education and training and the literacy crusade are among the features of the proposed province budget for 1372 [21 Mar 1993-20 Mar 1994].

He added: The proposed province budget and the cost of next year's reconstruction of Kordestan Province will be 150 billion rials, which is triple the amount allocated in 1371 [21 Mar 1992-20 Mar 1993].

Elsewhere in his talk, he cited the failure to make timely allocations of national credits in Kordestan as one of the main reasons for the stagnation in implementing national projects and called for the assignment to the provinces of the job of allocating national credits, and for the implementation of national projects by the provinces.

Continuing his talk, the governor general of Kordestan emphasized the necessity of enjoining good and prohibiting evil, especially in the offices. Concerning the measures taken in this regard, he said: The general managers of the offices must install complaint boxes so that the problems mentioned in these boxes can be dealt with by governor's and governor general's councils.

Bridge Opening To Facilitate Trade With Azerbaijan

93AS0367C Tehran ABRAR in Persian 8 Dec 92 p 13

[Text] Economics Division—The Khoda Afarin area steel bridge between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Republic of Azerbaijan will go into operation next week for the transport of goods for both sides.

When this bridge goes into operation, goods that were backed up because of the blockage of the Baku-Jalifa Railroad on the other side of the border will be brought into the country. Likewise, via this road the needs of the Republic of Nakhichevan will be met by the government of Azerbaijan.

Engineer Shafe'i, minister of cooperatives, announced the above yesterday to news reporters. He noted: By prior arrangement with the Armenian Government, last Thursday the Baku-Jalifa Railroad was to have reopened. Unfortunately, due to this government's illogical expectations, this agreement was not carried out at the last minute and we reached the conclusion with the Azari side that we should look into other routes, including the Khoda Afarin bridge, which was built for the construction of the Afarin dam and is going through its final phases of completion. Next week it will be opened for trucks carrying freight.

Likewise, as needed until the problem with the railroad is solved by the Government of Armenia, we will use other connective roads such as Aslanduz.

He emphasized: When the West Azerbaijan electrical power network was connected to the Nakhichevan network, 40 megawatts of power were sold at nonpeak hours beginning last Thursday night, and with reduced power outages in homes in this republic, we saw the people expressing feelings for the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Mr. Shafe'i also described the announcement of the reopening of the bridge between Nakhichevan and West Azerbaijan in the Shah Takhti and Poldasht area as very happy news for the people on both sides.

In conclusion, he asked all owners of goods to report to the appropriate offices as soon as possible to make arrangements to move their goods into the country.

Sarakhs To Become Free-Trade Zone

93AS0367B Tehran ABRAR in Persian 8 Dec 92 p 9

[Text] Mashhad—IRNA—The municipality of Sarakhs will become a free-trade zone to carry out commercial and trade transactions between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Republic of Turkmenistan.

This was announced by 'Abbas, general manager of Khorasan Customs, at a meeting of this province's Committee To Develop Nonoil Exports.

He said: With the reopening of the Sarakhs border and the construction of the Najan-Sarakhs-Mashhad railway, this city will be a great commercial, trade, and transit center for the Central Asian republics.

He discussed the fact that in order to build the customs facility in the Sarakhs free-trade zone, 250 hectares of land are needed, and he called for help from Qods-e Rezavi Province in this area.

The general manager of Khorasan Customs said: With the activation of the Bajgiran border customs office, the volume of nonoil exports from this border to Turkmenistan and the Central Asian republics was 2,000 tons valued at more than 180 million rials.

'Abbasi noted: During the same period the export of goods from Khorasan Customs increased 85 percent by weight and 65 percent by value.

At this meeting Engineer Ahmadi, general manager for coordination of economic affairs in the governor general's office of Khorasan reported on the activities at the second exclusive exhibition for the Islamic Republic of Iran in Eshqabad, the center of the Republic of Turkmenistan.

He said: During the 10 days of the exposition, industrialists and merchants from Khorasan signed 45 contracts and protocols with merchants and traders of the republics of Turkmenistan, Russia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and the Ukraine, valued at approximately \$30 million.

He proposed: To follow up on the agreements made with the merchants and traders in Turkmenistan, a committee has been formed whose members are the general offices of industry, the heavy commercial industries, customs, the governor general's office and the reconstruction crusade in the Chamber of Commerce, Industries and Mines.

Likewise at this meeting an industrialist said: It is necessary, to coordinate investment in the Republic of Turkmenistan, to establish an office representing the Chamber of Commerce and to appoint an economic adviser in the Islamic Republic of Iran's embassy in Eshqabad.

He also called for the formation of commercial and marketing classes for exporters and those who wish to invest in foreign countries.

At this meeting Eng. A'zami, deputy governor general of Khorasan Province for coordination and planning, praised and thanked those who were involved in the staff for the second exclusive exhibition for the Islamic Republic of Iran in Eshqabad.

He regarded one of the features of this exposition the growth in the heavy industries sector in machine and mechanical tool manufacture, which was noticed by visitors, and in this regard 50 percent of the goods offered for sale at the exposition were sold.

Unsanitary Conditions Threaten Health in Zahedan

93AS0367G Tehran ABRAR in Persian 19 Nov 92 p 5

[Text] Zahedan—IRNA—The existence of hundreds of stables in homes and unauthorized slaughterhouses inside and around the city of Zahedan has polluted the environment and spread various diseases, especially around the city.

The accumulation of garbage at dumping sites and open sewers on the one hand, the existence of numerous cattle pens outside the city and the lack of pesticides on the other hand, has given the city of Zahedan unprecedented vulnerability to flies.

Likewise, the failure to practice hygiene on the part of some citizens, especially those living on the fringes of Zahedan, the dumping of garbage beside the streets and public thoroughfares, and the failure to deal decisively with violators in hygienic matters, have made Zahedan a center of environmental pollution.

According to Saryazdi, the mayor of Zahedan, herds and livestock stables in the city of Zahedan have increased 98 percent in recent years, and it will be possible to round up the livestock units in the city only with the help of the judiciary.

He confirmed the existing problems in the city and added: An effort will be made to implement a garbage collection system and to improve the sewers so that the existing problems can be reduced to some extent.

On the other hand, Dr. Asadi, deputy director for health care of the Sistan va Baluchestan Province Health Care and Treatment Organization, said: Unfortunately between 60 to 80 percent of the meat is marketed by unauthorized slaughterhouses. Likewise, part of the milk is distributed in the city by cattle keepers on the edge of the city and is contaminated with various kinds of bacteria, and this in itself has doubled the hygiene losses.

Dr. Asadi added: Although some places where flies gather and other contaminated areas in Zahedan have been sprayed to a limited extent, due to the side effects of existing sprays in the environment, the continuation of such a practice is not permitted. The only way to fight the health care problems is to properly flush sewage and dispose of garbage, to properly grade the streets, to practice proper hygiene by some citizens, to round up the livestock pens and move them out of the city, and to deal decisively and legally with violators and unauthorized butchers.

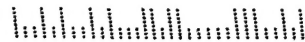
The deputy director for health care of the provincial Health Care and Treatment Organization announced: In view of the cold season, respiratory illnesses are among the most contagious diseases in the city.

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